Sir *Tho. Pope Blount's*

ESSAYS
ON SEVERAL
SUBJECTS.

Conamur Tenues Grandia.
Hor. Lib. 1. Od. 6.

The Third Impression; *with very* Large Additions.
Besides a New ESSAY *of* Religion.
And an Alphabetical INDEX *to the Whole.*

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Reader,

I *Here preſent you with the* Third Impreſſion *of my* ESSAYS; *to which there is now added above a* Third Part. *I ſhall only tell you, That they are intended purely for your Service, and therefore if they can afford you either* Inſtruction *or* Diverſion, *I am Satisfied.*

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ESSAY

ESSAY I.

That INTEREST *governs the* WORLD: *And that* Popery *is nothing but* Prieſt-Craft, *or an Invention of the* Prieſt's *to get* Money.

INTEREST is that *Univerſal Monarch*, to which all other Empires are Tributaries. It is the great *Idol* to which the World bows: To *this* we pay our devouteſt Homage, and give it not only our *Knees* but our *Hearts*.

Intereſt is of that *Magnetick* Quality, that our Affections are almoſt irreſiſtably attracted by it: It is the *Pole* to which we turn, and we commonly frame our Judgments ac-

cording to its direction. Men generally look more after the *Dowry*, than the *Beauty* of Truth, its correspondency to their *Interest*, than its evidence to their Understandings: And therefore whenever *Truth* and *Interest* are put into the balance, *Interest* still turns the *Scale*; most Men judging of *Truth* just as *Brutus* did of Virtue, that it is but *Nomen inane*, a meer empty sound; And that no wise Man would ever suffer himself to be canted out of his Profit and Advantage. An useful Error (then) hath often found free Admission, when important Truths, but contrary to Mens Preconceptions or *Interests*, have been forbidden entrance. Temporal Expectations bring in whole Droves to the *Mahumetan* Faith; and we too well know the same holds Thousands in the *Romish*. An advantagious Cause never wanted Proselytes. The Eagles will be where the Carcase is: And that shall have the Faith of most which is best able to pay 'em for't.

In

In all Ages of the World, *Intereſt* govern'd Mankind, and therefore we ſee the wiſeſt Law-makers ſtill built upon this Foundation; making it the *Intereſt* of the Community to put their Laws in Execution; hence *Plutarch* reported *Solon* to have ſaid, That he had ſo fram'd his Laws, that the Citizens were ſenſible, it was more their *Intereſt* to obſerve them, than to violate them. Almighty God, when he firſt gave Laws to his own People the *Jews*, was pleas'd to conſider them as a worldly covetous ſort of People; and therefore to make their Obedience the more eaſie, he gives 'em a Conſtitution agreeable to their Genius, promiſing 'em all ſorts of Temporal Bleſſings, ſuch as *Poſſeſſion of the Land, Freedom from Bondage*, &c. He very well knew, that *worldly Intereſt* would go a great deal further, than the pure, Intrinſick worth of Vertue and Goodneſs; and therefore that the ſureſt way to enforce his Laws, was

by ſtriking upon their Affections. Thus is God fain to deal with Man, juſt as the *Husbandman* in the *Goſpel* did; by proffering his *Penny* before he can prevail with 'em to work in his *Vineyard*. Chriſt obſerv'd, That the Multitudes throng'd after him more for the *Loaves* and *Fiſhes*, than for his Doctrine; intimating that few lov'd him *Gratis*, but to make advantage by him: And this the *Devil* knew too well, when he charg'd *Job* with it, ſaying, *Does* Job *ſerve God for nought?* In a word, *Gain* and *Advantage* is that which every Man aims at; be the Buſineſs never ſo *Bad*, you may have it done for Money; and be it never ſo *Good*, you cannot have it done without. Let us but caſt our Eyes upon thoſe two Religions, the *old Heatheniſh* and the *Romiſh*, and we ſhall ſoon ſee their reſpective *Prieſts* offering Incenſe to the *Unrighteous Mammon*. Whoever looks into the whole Body (or rather *Chaos*) of the Religion of the *Ancient Hea-*

Heathens, will find, that it was chiefly made up of ſuch ſtrange and extravagant Stories of their *Gods* and *Heroes*, that it became loathſome to the moſt Intelligent Part of themſelves. Their very *Myſteria Sacra* were ſo full of all wickedneſs and filthy Abominations, that it was counted the very wiſeſt Point in all their Religion, to take ſuch mighty care as they did, for the keeping them Secret. Such confuſed Notions had they of their *Elyſium*, that the Epithet of *Shades* belong'd more properly to the *Darkneſs*, than the *Refreſhment*; and was a Reward fit for the *Votaries* of thoſe ambiguous *Oracles* they conſulted! In ſhort, their Religion was all wrapt up in Clouds, and Darkneſs: Many of their *Worſhips* were nothing but a Solemnity of the Foulеſt Vices; and their *Divinity* taught 'em only to vitiate *Morality*. In *Rome*, their Religion was grown to that height of abſurdity, that one tells us in *Cicero*, That even

the *Roman* Prieſts themſelves did to ſuch a degree contemn their own Devotions and Ceremonies, that they could ſcarce forbear ſmiling when they met in the Street, to think how cleaverly the Cheat went on. In a Word, never any one ſcorn'd any thing more, than *Cæſar* himſelf did his own *Gods*, and, as *Tertullian* obſerves, would often pleaſe himſelf, in that he was able to make his *Gods* feel the Power of his Anger.

But to be a little more Particular; No ſooner was that which was called by the name of Religion, planted among the *Heathen*, but immediately their *Prieſts*, a pert forward ſort of Men, ſtood up, and inſinuated to the People the abſolute Neceſſity of *Sacrifices*; and that theſe *Sacrifices* cou'd never be acceptable to the *Gods*, unleſs they were offer'd up by uncorrupt, Sanctified Hands, meaning *their own*. How beneficial theſe *Sacrifices* were to the *Heathen Prieſts*, you may eaſily imagine;

gine; since according to the old Proverb, 'tis an ill Cook that can't lick his own Fingers. And unless their *Priests* had found advantage by it, certainly they would never have enjoin'd the People such an unaccountable way of Worship. For what a strange and uncouth Belief was it to think that the most proper way to attone and pacifie their *Offended Gods*, was by slaying and sacrificing *Innocent Creatures*? But as unreasonable as this may seem to Men of Honesty and Sincerity, yet the *Heathen Priests* (men wholly actuated by Interest) conceiv'd different sentiments. For whatever contributed to their advantage, they never boggled at; and the *Prosperum Scelus* was all the *Versue* they desir'd. Hence then it was, that the *Heathens* turn'd Religion into a Trade, wherein the most gainful was their *Sacrifices*: *Mendicantes victatim Deos ducunt*; a God was then as fit an Object for Charity, as now a broken Arm, or a Wooden Leg:

Nor did they consider their Gods any otherwise, than for their own Interest. Thus then these subtile, crafty *Heathen Priests*, observing that mankind was for the most part ill-natur'd and not apt to oblige others without some reward, as also judging of God Almighty by themselves, did at first conceive the *Gods* to be like their *Eastern* Princes, before whom no Man might come empty-handed: Hence, I say, the crafty Sacerdotal Order (who were maintain'd and grew rich out of the Follies and Passions of Men) did above all things inculcate and propagate this Opinion: And for as much as good part of the Offerings fell to the *Priest's* share: Therefore they soon left off *Pythagoras*'s poor Institution of *Frankincense*, *Fruits*, *Flowers*, &c. Which lasted till their *Gods* (or to speak truly their *Priests*) grew so covetous, that nothing but the Bloud of *Beasts* could satiate them, and so fell to *Sacrificing* first *Beasts*, then *Men*, *Women* and *Children*,

dren, and the very *Gods* themſelves, if they could have got them, and (as a late Author obſerves) all this was to bring Roſt-meat to the *Prieſts*.

Was it not alſo from the ſame root, I mean, the covetous Temper of the *Heathen Prieſts*, from whence ſprung up the firſt *Idolatry* that ever was in the World? I know very well, that many of the *Ancients* have excus'd the Heathen's *Polytheiſm*, by telling us, That they worſhip'd not divers Gods, but one and the ſame, under ſeveral Appellations, and Names, according to thoſe various Benefits they had received from him, or thoſe divers Apprehenſions they had of him. As *Lipſius*, ſpeaking of the *Gods* of the *Stoicks*, ſays, They were rather *Multitudo Nominum, quàm Numinum*, a Multitude of Names, rather than of Natures. And St. *Auſtin*, in his *De Civitate Dei cap.* 24. brings in the *Heathens*, pleading for themſelves, That they were not ſo ridiculouſly ignorant,

as

as to think *Vertue*, or *Fortune*, or the Reſt, *Gods*, but only divers Expreſſions of the ſame *Deity*. Take it (then) with this charitable Interpretation, ſtill theſe *Godlins*, or *Under-Gods*, were of mighty advantage to the *Prieſts*, and brought in abundance of Griſt to their Mill. For thoſe *Spiritual Sharpers* knew well enough, That the celebrating many Gods, and the introducing ſeveral Worſhips of them, would turn much more to their Profit and Advantage, than the ſingle Worſhip of the *Supreme God*: And therefore rather than want *Gods*, they took care to coin a Sufficienr number of them; there being no leſs (according to *Varro*) than thirty thouſand *Heathen Deities*. And that the *Prieſts* (let 'em pretend to what they would) conſulted not herein the Good of the People, ſo much, as their own particular *Intereſts*, does moſt manifeſtly appear, by the choice they made of their *Gods*; moſt of whom (we know) were renowned for

for nothing ſo much as for their Vices: *Mars*, a Bloudy God; *Bacchus*, a Drunken God; *Mercury*, a Cheating God; and ſo proportionably in the ſeveral kinds all the reſt; Nay, even their great Capital God, *Jupiter*, was guilty of almoſt all the Capital Vices. And therefore no Wonder, we find ſuch groſs and extravagant things in the old *Heatheniſh* Religion, when the very *Gods*, whom they Worſhipp'd, gave ſuch encouragement thereunto by their own lewd example: And where the *Gods* are naught, who can expect the *Religion* ſhould be good; for 'tis the Nature of all Religions, to encline Men to imitate him whom they Worſhip.

Another Artifice whereby the *Heathen Prieſts* us'd to make themſelves valu'd and eſteem'd, was that Invention of theirs, the ſetting up of *Oracles*. 'Tis hard to ſay, who were guilty of the greater folly, the *ignorant Heathen*, who believ'd thoſe Prædictions to come from *Heaven*;

or those *Superstitious Christians*, who thought they came from the *Devil*; since they were both under a gross Mistake. For certainly to any Man, who is unbiass'd in Opinion, and who dares suffer himself to think beyond the narrow Rules of his Education, they cannot appear to be any thing but the meer juggling and Imposture of the *Heathen Priests*. But since a learned Divine of the Church of *England* (Mr. *John Edwards*, in his farther *Enquiry* into some Remarkable *Texts* of *Scripture*) has thought fit to fall foul upon this Opinion of Mine: He affirming, that the *Oracles* were first invented by the *Devil*, and that the *Priests* in this Matter acted only *Ministerially*; I hope, I shall not tire the Patience of the *Reader*, if in my own Defence I enlarge upon this Subject, and even from the very best Authorities prove this my Assertion. *Theodoret* says, That *Theophilus*, Bishop of *Alexandria*, shew'd the Inhabitants of that Town, the

Hollow

Hollow Statues, into which the *Priests* privately crept to deliver their *Oracles*. When the Temple of *Æsculapius*, in *Cilicia*, was by *Constantine's* Order pull'd down *Eusebius* in the Life of this *Emperour* tells us, they chased thence, not a *God*, nor a *Dæmon*, but the *Cheat*, that had so long deluded the People. *He adds*, that in general, in the demolish'd *Idols*, they found no *Gods* at all nor *Dæmons*, nor so much as a melancholy Shade, or obscure Sight; but only some *Hay*, *Straw*, or *Ordure*, or the Bones of dead Men. The same *Eusebius*, in the fourth Book of his *Evangelical Preparation*, says, That in his time, the most famous Prophets amongst the *Pagans*, and their most celebrated *Divines*, of whom some were *Magistrates* of their Cities, were compell'd by torments to discover the very Particulars of all the Cheats of the *Oracles*. *Osbourn* in his Advice to his Son, is of the Opinion, That the *Oracles* of Old were nothing but the Impostures of

Priests

Prieſts, who poſſibly might have the knack of ſpeaking either in the *Throat* or *Belly*, (as our *Ventriloquiſts* now a days can,) which ſeem'd to be a Voice at a great Diſtance. But *others* fancy, That it is not improbable, but that ſort of *Trumpet*, which multiplies the ſound, might not then be altogether unknown: And that perhaps, Sir *Samuel Moreland* has but reviv'd this Secret, which formerly the *Pagan Prieſts* were Maſters of; tho' they choſe rather to get profit by concealing it than honour by publiſhing it. And that which induces many to believe this laſt Opinion, is from the aſſurance that *Athanaſius Kircher* gives us, That *Alexander* had one of theſe Inſtruments, by which he made himſelf be heard by his whole Army at the ſame time. There were no Countries obſerv'd to be ſo full of *Oracles*, as thoſe that were moſt Mountainous and by conſequence full of Holes and Caverns; ſuch as *Bæotia*, which as *Plutarch* tells us, was anciently

ciently thronged with 'em. But at the ſame time 'tis worth noting, That the *Bœotians* were counted the ſilliest and moſt ignorant People in the World; And therefore it was the moſt proper Country that could be for *Oracles*, being full of *Block-heads* and *Caverns*. Now, the pretence of *Divine Exhalations* was one main thing that render'd theſe *Caverns* ſo very neceſſary: For according to *Plutarch*'s vain Philoſophy, we are to ſuppoſe, that the Predictions of the *Oracles* were perform'd by *Exhalation* or vapour drawn from the Earth; and this is the very reaſon he gives of their *Being*, that they were for a time nouriſh'd by thoſe *Exhalations*; and when *thoſe* ceaſed and were exhauſted, the *Oracles* famiſh'd and dy'd, for want of their accuſtom'd Suſtenance. But how ſo great a Man as *Plutarch* ſeems to be in other things, could entertain ſuch a trifling Opinion, 'tis not eaſie to imagine.

Again, *Caverns* of themſelves are apt

apt to affect one with a certain Horror, which does not a little advance Superstition; and in things that are only to make Impressions on the Imaginations of Men, nothing ought to be neglected. Besides, these *Cavities* made the Voice sound much bigger, and caus'd rebounding *Ecchoes*, which imprinted a sort of awful Terror in all that approach'd it. Hence the *Poets* tell us, That the *Pythian Priestesses* strain'd their Voices, so much beyond the pitch of Nature, that they appear'd to be more than *Humane*. I cannot but wonder to see, how very zealous Mr. *Edwards* in his Discourse of the *Oracles* seems to be in asserting the Truth of their *Predictions*, when it is most notorious, that no *Almanack-Maker* writes with less certainty of the Weather, than *they* generally pronounced about future Events; and if their *Answers* were not directly false, yet they were so Ambiguous, or at least so Obscure, that many times there needed another

ther *Oracle* to explain 'em. As to the common obſervation concerning the *Decay* of *Oracles* at the coming of our Bleſſed *Saviour*, 'tis but a meer fancy; for my part, I do not in the leaſt value any *Oracle* or Sentence, that may be brought to that purpoſe being well aſſur'd, that they were but the meer Forgeries of *Primitive Chriſtians*, whole blind intemperate Zeal did tempt 'em to forge not only *Sentences* but *whole Authors*, as any who have not read *Hiſtories* themſelves, may find in *Caſaubon's* Exercitations on *Baronius*, *Blondel* on the *Sybils*, as alſo the *Decree* of Pope *Gelaſius*, who amongſt other Counterfeit Authors does prohibit Counterfeit Prophets, Counterfeit Goſpels, and Counterfeit Acts of the Apoſtles. Beſides, I would fain know what ſome Men mean by the *ceaſing* of *Oracles* at the coming of *Chriſt*: If they mean, that *Oracles* were then quite ſilent, that's utterly falſe. For *Plutarch* tells us, that in his time, which was after

Chriſt, the *Oracle* at *Delphos* in *Phocis*, as alſo that at *Lebadia*, a Town in *Bæotia*, did ſtill give Anſwers. Again, if they mean only, that *Oracles* were much out of Requeſt at the coming of *Chriſt*; I anſwer, ſo they were long before his coming, witneſs a very good Author, *Marcus Tullius Cicero*, who died ſome Years before *Chriſt* was born. Yet it appears by his ſecond Book of *Divination*, that *Oracles* were ſo much gon to decay long before his time, that in his days there was nothing more Contemptible. Now in ſhort, that which did ſo much contribute to the keeping up the great Credit and Reputation of theſe *Oracles*, for ſo many Ages, was the mighty favour and deference ſhew'd 'em by the greateſt Princes: And therefore we find that however ignorant the People were of theſe Matters, yet all things lay open to the view of the Prince, who made uſe of this ſet of Men upon a Politick Deſign; for *they* upon all Occaſions were ready

ready to promote the *Intereſt* and Ambitious Deſigns of the preſent Rulers. And therefore, whenever there was any extraordinary Emergency for making uſe of the People, as in time of War, it was always contriv'd, that the *Oracle* ſhould be *conſulted*, which never fail'd to *Pronounce* in favour of the preſent Government. No wonder then, the *Prieſts* were ſuch Favourites at *Court*, ſince they were ſo uſeful to the *Prince* in the Managing and Steering of the common People. We find in Hiſtory, that ſome few had the Priviledge to enter into the *Sanctuaries* of theſe *Oracles*, where all the *Machines* of the *Prieſts* lay; but they were Perſons of no leſs Quality than *Alexander* and *Veſpaſian*. And the reaſon why they ſhew'd this favour only to *Princes*, was becauſe they knew it to be *their* Intereſt to keep the Secret; and that in the Circumſtances they were then, they had much more reaſon to *raiſe* than to *leſſen* the Reputation

of *Oracles*. And for this very reason, the learned Men, for fear they should disoblige their *Princes*, durst not speak against *Oracles*. But in process of time, the People grew less credulous of their *Priests*, and so the *Oracles* were struck Dumb. Hence the Learned *Selden* observes, That *no sooner did People cease to believe* Oracles, *but even the* Oracles *themselves did then cease to be*. So that the Occasion of their Ceasing, was no more, than as it is with Shop-keepers Breaking, the loss of Credit. But to conclude, that which most discover'd the Vanity of the *Oracles*, was that even those who consulted 'em (which they did only to comply with the Weakness of the People, and gain Reputation among the unthinking Multitude) if they found them not favorable, either went on nevertheless in the Prosecution of their Designs, or else forced them to *pronounce* such as should be to their advantage. This Course was taken by *Alexander*

der the Great, and *Cleomenes*; by the *former*, when he consulted the *Pythian*; by the *other*, when he consulted the *Delphick* Oracle: Both which they forc'd to say what they pleas'd themselves. And thus I hope, I have to the Satisfaction of the Reader, demonstrated, That the *Oracles* which have made such a mighty noise in the World, were nothing but the Juggles and Impostures of the *Heathen Priests*; and that the *Devil* was no otherwise the Author of 'em, than as he is properly said to be the Author of all Sin and Wickedness. What reason then had Mr. *Edwards* to fall upon me with so much Malice and Bitterness of Spirit, belching out such Expressions as these, *viz.* That *I am wonderfully Civil and Obliging, extreamly Courteous and Friendly to the great Enemy of Mankind.* And then with wonderful Smartness he goes on, *I see the* Devil *is a very Innocent and Harmless Creature, according to some Persons*; (I fancy,

without consulting an *Oracle*, I can tell what he means by the word *Some*;) But now comes the *Inspiration Thought*, *But it will be well for them if they find it so.* Indeed, I thought it a thousand Pities, that so much Wit and good Nature should be lost to the World, and therefore pray let Mr. *Edwards* have all the Praise and Honour of it, and so I bid him *Farewell.* Thus in the first Ages of the World did Men suffer themselves to be gull'd and chous'd by the Artifice of their Crafty and Ambitious *Priests*, whose only *Principle* was that of INTEREST.

Let us now see whether, when *Popery* came upon the Stage, the world was any thing mended: Or, whether the *Popish Priests* were men more abstracted from *Worldly Interest*, or no. In after times, when *Rome Pagan* became *Rome Christian*, then sprung there up a new *Set* of men, who for Craft and Subtilty did many degrees outgo their Predecessors,

deceſſors, the *Heathen Prieſts*; theſe appear'd but meer Bunglers, Compared to this new Brood, whoſe very *Religion* was nothing elſe, but *Sacerdotal Intereſt*. For who ever examines the whole Fabrick of *Popery*, ſhall find, That the Corner Stone of that Building is *Intereſt*; and were it not for the *Profitable* part, I queſtion not but the *Fooliſh* part of *Popery* would ſoon be laught out of Doors. But ſince the true Nature of things is beſt to be learnt in their *Minute parts* we will lay aſide *Generals*, and deſcend to *Particulars*: To begin therefore with the very *Original* of *Popery*, which you will find to be thus. As on the one hand it muſt be confeſs'd, That the *Primitive Chriſtians*, who were generally Subjects of the *Roman* Empire, had a very great Deference and Reſpect, for the Biſhops of *Rome*, becauſe that was the *Imperial* City; ſo on the other hand, Church-Hiſtory plainly ſhews, That notwithſtanding this great Deference, the Biſhops of

Rome had no Authority or Jurisdiction out of their own *Province*, that is, beyond the *Suburbicary* Region of *Italy*, till after the Division of the *Roman* Empire into *Eastern* and *Western*. It was not long after that Division, and chiefly upon the Weakness of the *Western* Empire, that that Power, which we now call the *Papacy*, grew up. As the *Empire* decay'd, so by degrees *this* encreased and gather'd strength; the Design being at first, not to set up a *new Religion*, but a *new Monarchy* in the place of the *Old* then expiring. Thus while the *Roman* Empire was gasping for Life, did the Bishops of *Rome* force it to make what Will and Testament they pleas'd. And therefore Mr. *Hobbs* calls the *Papacy*, *The Ghost of the deceased* Roman *Empire, sitting Crown'd upon the Grave thereof.* Being thus Established, and making *Rome* whose Name was still Venerable, the Seat of their Dominion, they soon obtain'd a Supremacy over the *Western* World.

World. In this Manner, and with these Steps did the *Papacy* first advance it Self; their Designs being apparently Secular, tending not to the Salvation of Mens Souls, but the Support of their own Grandeur. And therefore these *Spiritual Machiavillians*, according to the Old Policy, are for preserving their Empire after the same Way and Manner as it was at first acquir'd. No wonder then, that the chief *Topick* of *Popery*, is *Argumentum ab Utili*; which of all Arguments carries the greatest force in the Church of *Rome*: And this will more plainly appear, if we do but draw up the Curtain, and present you with *Popery* in its full light. 'Tis scarce within the reach of *Arithmetick*, what vast, prodigious Sums these several Doctrines [the *Pope's Supremacy*; *Purgatory*; *Indulgences*; *Auricular Confession*; and the *Celibacy* of the *Clergy*] bring in to the Church; And therefore (as one wittily expresses it)

They

They must maintain them, because they are maintained by them.

1. To begin then with the *Pope's Supremacy.* How slight a Foundation this Doctrine hath, I think to any rational Man will soon appear; for supposing St. *Peter* was Bishop of *Rome* (tho' as I shall prove anon, there is little reason to believe any such thing) and as *Metropolitan* thereof, he had the Precedency of the rest of the Apostles; what then? Could hence a sufficient Power be devolv'd on his Successor, to raise a real *Monarchy,* and to claim an absolute Jurisdiction over the whole World, with a Power to dispose of Crowns and Kingdoms? This is certainly a *Non Sequitur.* Nor was St. *Peter* ever vested with any such Priviledges as these, nor did his Successors for many Ages ever challenge 'em; and at last the only Title the *Pope* had to 'em, was *Usurpation.* But indeed, 'tis so far from being demonstrable, that St. *Peter* was Bishop of *Rome,* that it is

is not ſo much as Probable he was ever there. I am ſure the *Scripture* mentions no ſuch thing; and his *Epiſtle* is dated from *Babylon* in *Aſſyria*. When *Paul* writes to the *Romans*, and ſends *Greeting* to above Forty by Name, he ſays not the leaſt tittle of *Peter*; whom in all probability, he would have remember'd either then, or afterward, when from *Rome* he ſent particular Salutation from others in ſeveral of his *Epiſtles*. Nay, he complains, *Philipp.* 2. 21. That *all who were at* Rome, *ſought their own, not the Things which are Jeſus Chriſt's*. And 2 *Tim.* 4: 16. *Paul* at his firſt Anſwer, when conven'd before *Nero*, complain'd, That *no Man ſtood by him, but all Men forſook him.* All which ſure he could not have ſaid, if *Peter* had been there. I know it is generally ſaid, That St. *Peter* aſſum'd the Biſhoprick of *Rome* in the time of *Claudius*, who (as St. *Luke* and other Hiſtories do report) did baniſh all the *Jews* from *Rome*, as

Tiberius

Tiberius alſo had done before him. And then, how can a Man reaſonably believe, That ſo skillful a *Fiſherman*, as St. *Peter*, ſhould chuſe to caſt his *Net* there, where he knew, there were no Fiſh to be caught? Again, I cannot conceive for what reaſon, or to what end and purpoſe St. *Peter*, who was an Apoſtle ſhould be made a *Biſhop*: Methinks this is ſo far from being neceſſary, that really to me it ſeems very prepoſterous. For by vertue of his *Apoſtleſhip* he had ſufficient Power to exerciſe *Epiſcopal* Functions and Authority, either at *Rome* or any where elſe. What need a *Soveraign Prince* be made a *Juſtice of Peace*? It had therefore been a great Degradation of St. *Peter*, and Diſparagement to the *Apoſtolical Majeſty*, for him to take upon him the Biſhoprick of *Rome*; juſt as if the *King* ſhould be *Lord Mayor* of *London*; or as if the *Biſhop* of *London* ſhould be made *Vicar* of *Pancras*. But how unreaſonable ſoever this Doctrine of the

Supremacy

Supremacy may appear to thoſe who get not by it, yet his *Holineſs*, has reaſon to keep it up, ſince it ſerves to the filling his Coffers: And if he ſhould once part with it, he at the ſame time lopps off the beſt Branch of his Revenue.

2. As to *Purgatory*. This Doctrine was never ſo much as thought off till St. *Auſtin's* time, who both *ſaid* it, and *unſaid* it, and at laſt left it doubtful: Nor did it come into any ſort of Credit till about two Hundred years after, in the time of Pope *Gregory* the Firſt. The *Papiſts* themſelves are ſo divided as to all the Points and Circumſtances of this Doctrine, that poſſibly it will not a little Entertain the Reader, to ſee the fooliſh variety of Opinions relating to this Doctrine: *Firſt* as to the *Place*, where they ſuppoſe this Imaginary Gaol to be; *Eckius* will have it to be in the Bottom of the Sea; *others* will have it either in Mount *Ætna* or *Veſuvius*; but *Bernard de Buſtis* places

ces it in an Hill in *Ireland*. Next, as to the *Torments*, Sir *Thomas More* will have 'em to be only by *Fire*; but *Fiſher* by *Fire* and *Water*; *Lorichius*, neither by Fire nor by Water, but by the violent Convulſions of *Hope* and *Fear*. Then as to the *Executioners*, or *Tormentors*; They do as little agree about them; for Biſhop *Fiſher* will have 'em to be the *Holy Angels*; but Sir *Thomas More* to be the very *Devils*. Then, as to the *Sins* to be there *Expiated*; ſome will have 'em to be the *Venial* only; but others ſay the *Mortal* too. And for the time of the Souls continuance in that State, *Dennis* the *Carthuſian* extends it to the end of the World; whereas *Dominicus à Soto* limits it to ten years; and others make it depend on the Number of *Maſſes*, and Offices, that ſhall be ſaid or done on their behalf. Laſtly, as to the *Extremity* of the *Pains*; *Aquinas* makes them as violent as thoſe of *Hell*; but the *Rhemiſts*, in their Annotations upon *Revelations* the

the 14th, *verse* the 13th, say, That the Souls there are in a very fine Condition; And *Durandus*, *de Offic. Mortuorum*, *cap.* VII. between these *Extreams*, gives 'em some Intermission from those terrible Pains, upon *Sundays*, and *Holy-days*. So foolishly extravagant are these several Fancies & Conceits of *Purgatory*, that it may not be altogether Impertinent to enquire into the Original and Source of this Doctrine: And this will presently appear to any one who is in the least vers'd in the Heathen Poets and Philosophers. *These* were the first Hatchers of this Notion, and from thence was it first deriv'd. *Homer*, in the second Book of his *Odyss.* Entertains us with long Stories of *Ulysses*'s Descent into Hell; the Dialogues of Ghosts; the Punishment of Departed Souls; and the Sacrifices to be Offer'd to relieve 'em: And herein is he imitated by *Virgil*, who, in the sixth of his *Æneids*, brings in *Anchises* discoursing at the same rate. Nor were their *Philosophers* free from these

these sort of Dreams; witness *Plato*, who in his Book *De Animâ* broaches the like Doctrine: and *Cicero*, in *Scipio's* Dream, Harps upon the same String. Hence *Bellarmin* urging several reasons for this Doctrine of *Purgatory*, his *third* is taken from the common Opinion of all Nations, *Hebrews*, *Mahumetans*, and *Gentiles*, both *Philosophers* and *Poets*. But to conclude this Point, as ridiculous as this Doctrine of *Purgatory* is, there is not any one Opinion in the Church of *Rome*, that the *Romanists* are more zealous in the Asserting: Nor is it to be wonder'd, that they are so, since herein they Act upon *Demetrius's* Principle, because *thereby they have their Gain*; and therefore well may they be allow'd to be Angry, and Displeas'd at all those, who speak or write against it: For by that means *their Craft is in danger to be set at nought*. There being no Opinion in their Church, which brings in a better and more constant Revenue

Revenue, by *Masses*, *Dirges*, *Requiems*, *Trentals*, and *Anniversaries*, besides *Casualties* and *Deodands*, by dying Persons, or their Friends, in hopes of a speedier Release out of the Pains of *Purgatory*. So that if this Opinion were once out of Countenance in the World, they wou'd then lose one of the best Arts they have of upholding the Grandure of their Church. And it is very remarkable, That the fear of losing this Income, was one main impediment to restrain the Pope from yielding to a *Reformation*.

3. As to *Indulgences* and *Pardons*. In the Primitive times, when the *Christians* had committed any heinous Crime, as for Example, either in denying their Faith, or Sacrificing to Idols, for fear of Persecution; the Parties offending were enjoyn'd some severe and long Pennance: And the rigour of this, the Bishops, or Pastors, in their respective Congregations had Power (if they saw Cause) to mitigate at their discretion; which

Mitigation, or Relaxation of Puniſhment was call'd an *Indulgence*, or ſometimes a *Pardon*. And this was deriv'd from St. *Paul*, who releas'd the *Inceſtuous Corinthian* from the Bond of Excommunication, upon his Humiliation, and ſerious Repentance. This manner of *Indulgence* was Ancient and of long Continuance in the Primitive Church. The firſt Account we have of perverting this Cuſtom, and the proſtituting it, to ſecular Ends, was in the time of Pope *Gregory* the I. about the year *Six Hundred*. And ever ſince that time, 'tis ſcarce credible, what an immenſe Sum this Doctrine has brought in to the Church. And certainly, of all the Arts that the Church of *Rome* hath for the raiſing of *Money*, this is the cleverest, and neateſt Contrivance; and therefore One wittily calls theſe *Indulgences* Emulgences, and even by the *Romaniſts* themſelves they are ſtil'd, in their trueſt Signification, *The Treaſury of the Church*. The *Pope* is the

the ſole Diſpenſer and Diſpoſer of theſe *Indulgences*; and therefore whenever he hath occaſion, or a mind to fill his Treaſury, all that he needs to do, is, upon pretence of War againſt the Infidels or Hereticks, to ſend out, and proclaim Marts, and Sales for theſe *Indulgences*, upon condition that thoſe, who wou'd disburſe any Sums of *Money* (which is all to be laid out, as he pretends, upon the ſaid Occaſion) ſhou'd have *Pardons* and *Indulgences* for numbers of years proportionable to the Summs they cou'd, or wou'd depoſite; *Namaliter non abſolvebantur niſi tribuerent ſecundùm poſſe Suum, & facultatem Suam*; for otherwiſe they cou'd not be abſolv'd, except they did disburſe as much as their Abilities wou'd afford, as *Henry de Knighton*, an *Engliſh* Hiſtorian in *Richard* the ſecond's time, honeſtly and plainly tells us: And then as for the Poor and Indigent, truly they deſerve our pity when the *Taxa Cameræ Apoſtolicæ*, deals thus plainly with 'em,

Nota diligenter quòd hujuſmodi Gratiæ non conceduntur Pauperibus; Quia *non habent, ergò non poſſunt Conſolari*; *Note diligently, That ſuch Graces are not granted to the Poor*; Becauſe *they have not wherewithal, they cannot be comforted:* A very ſad caſe indeed! Thus, tho' our *Saviour* tells us, how hard a thing it is for a *Rich* Man to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, yet by the Religion of *Popery*, the difficulty lies wholly on the *Poor* Man's ſide; And the only Sin capable of *Damning* a *Rich* Man, is that of *Covetouſneſs*; for let him but oil St. *Peter's* Keys well, and than the *Wicket* will preſently be open'd, and the Soul let into the *Popiſh Heaven*, which I doubt at laſt will prove but a *Fools Paradiſe*.

4. As to *Auricular Confeſſion*. The neceſſity of this Doctrine was unknown to the Fathers of the Primitive Church. Nay, about a thouſand years after *Chriſt*, it was held diſputable in the *Roman* Church. And

And tho' the Practice of it was impos'd by Pope *Innocent*, in his Council of *Lateran*; yet even then it remain'd diſputable as to the Doctrine, till the *Council* of *Trent* gave it the Sanction of *Divine Faith*. At firſt it was voluntary, and only us'd in caſe of a troubled Conſcience, or a ſtrong Temptation: But it is now made neceſſary at ſtated times, in all probability to make the *Prieſt* Maſter of every Man's ſecrets. This is the main curb of the *Laity*, whereby the *Clergy* hold them in awe; for by this means they have an *Intelligencer* in the breaſt of every great Man of their Communion; which is a Thing of that vaſt Conſequence, that if ever they part with it, then farewell *Popery*.

5. As for the *Celibacy* of the *Clergy*. That this Cuſtom was deriv'd from the *Heathens* will plainly appear; *Clemens Alexandrinus* tells us, That the *Ancient Hereticks* took occaſion to condemn Marriage from the Precepts and Practices of *Pagan*

Philoſophers. And St. *Hieron* ſaith, That the *Athenian Hierophanta's* to this day, by ſupping the Broth of *Hemlock*, make themſelves Chaſt (being forbidden Marriage) before they were admitted into ſacred Orders, or advanced to *Prelatical* Dignity. And *Alexander ab Alexandro* informs us, That the *Prieſts* of *Cybele* did caſtrate themſelves, that they might be chaſt. And he further adds in the ſame place, That thoſe who perform'd their greateſt Solemnities (or their *Chief Prieſts*) that they might continue in chaſt Religion, and eſcape the Contagion of Women, did emaſculate themſelves with certain Herbs. And *Euripides* teſtifieth, That in *Crete* thoſe whom they call'd *The Prophets of Jupiter*, do not only abſtain from Fleſh, but alſo from all ſavoury Meat. And the like did the *Indian Magi*, who were advanced to the *Prieſthood of the Sun*: And among the *Aſſyrians*, the *Prieſts* of *Diana Ecbatana* liv'd in perpetual Virginity. To add more Teſtimonies

monies is needleſs, ſince the *Romaniſts* are themſelves ſo far from denying it, that ſeveral of them, as Pope *Syricius*, *Medina*, and others, urge it as an unanſwerable Argument againſt the *Marriage* of *Prieſts*. But notwithſtanding the great care the *Heathen Prieſts* took as to their *Chaſtity*, yet we find it ſignified but little; and therefore *Arnobius* deſcribing the ſingle Life of *Prieſts* amongſt the *Heathen*, ſaith, Where are *Whoredoms* more frequently committed than by *Prieſts*, even in their *Temples*, nay before the very *Altars*? And in the Concluſion he tells us, That their Luſt was more frequently diſcharg'd in *Chancels*, than *Brothel-Houſes*. But having ſhew'd this to be a Cuſtom deriv'd from the *Heathens*, and the Effect it had; Let us (now) ſee, whether the *Primitive Chriſtians* had any ſuch Uſage; and when, and by what means, it was firſt introduced, and the uſe that hath ſince been made of it. That there was no ſuch

Uſage in the *Primitive Church*, is moſt certain; for St. *Ambroſe* in his *Comment* on the 2 *Cor.* 11. teſtifies, That all the *Apoſtles*, except St. *John* and St. *Paul*, had Wives. And alſo *Euſebius*, *Ruffinus*, and *Socrates*, Eccleſiaſtical Writers of great Note, do all teſtifie of ſeveral very Religious Biſhops, who had Children by their Lawful Wives, after they were Biſhops. And the *Greek* Church even to this day obſerves it for a Cuſtom, not to admit any into *Holy Orders*, unleſs they were *Married*; as judging them then more Staid, and leſs ſubject to Temptations. The firſt Account we meet with of Prohibiting *Wives* to the *Clergy*, was not long before the *Nicene Council*: A fooliſh opinion had then ſeiz'd the Heads of ſome of the leading Men of the Church, That *no Married Man was fit to Officiate at the Altar*; Whereupon the Queſtion came to be ſtarted in the *Council* of *Nice*; of which matter the Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtorians,

Socrates,

Socrates, lib. 1. cap. XI. gives us this Account, Ἔδοξε τοῖς ἐπισκόποις, &c. *It pleased some of the Bishops to bring in a new Law into the Church, That those who were dedicated to the Holy Ministry*, viz. *Bishops*, *Priests* and *Deacons*, *should not sleep any longer with their Wives*. But this at first was most strenuously oppos'd, and particularly by one *Paphnutius*, an *Ægiptian* Bishop, who had formerly one of his Eyes pluck out for the Testimony of the Blessed *Jesus*. Nor did this Doctrine advance it self into a *Decree*, till above fifty years after, at which time *Siricius* Bishop of *Rome*, first ordain'd it; tho' for many Hundred Years after it was not much observ'd, till *Gregory* the VII. commonly call'd *Hildebrand* began to put it in Execution; by excommunicating all such *Marry'd Priests*, as would not immediately quit their Wives, and take the Oath of *Continency*. And this hath been strictly observ'd ever since; the *Council* of *Trent* having denounced an *Anathema*

ma againſt all thoſe who ſhall ſay, That *Clerks in Holy Orders may contract Matrimony: And that ſuch a Contract is valid*, notwithſtanding *the Laws and Conſtitutions of the Church.* But how little this *Romiſh Celibacy* ſignified amongſt their *Prieſts*, as to the keeping 'em Chaſt, even their own Hiſtorians can beſt inform us. *Matthew Paris* tells us, the *Pope* thought it almoſt a Miracle to hear a *Candidate* for a Biſhoprick atteſted to be a *pure Virgin*. *Alvarus Pelagius*, a *Portugal* Biſhop, in the 14th Century, in his known Book, *De Planctu Eccleſiæ*, amongſt other crying Sins of the *Roman* Clergy of his days, laments in an eſpecial manner their Incontinency, wiſhing that the *Spaniards* and *Regricolæ* eſpecially, had never promis'd Continency: The Children of the *Clergy* being in thoſe Countries (ſaith he) more numerous than thoſe of the *Laity*; and what is more deteſtable, for ſeveral years together, from their Concubines

Beds

Beds they go ſtraight to the *Altar*. And in another place, the very ſame Author complains of their debauching the Women, who came to Confeſſion. *Alphonſus à Caſtro* tells us, That if they ſhould attempt to conceal the Incontinency of the *Clergy*, their own Children would proclaim it. *Johannes Aventinus* affirms, That the *Salacity* of the *Prieſts* was ſo famous that it was grown into a *Proverb*. *Robert Holkot*, who liv'd in the 14th Century, a *Dominican* by Profeſſion and born at *Northampton*, ſtiles the *Prieſts* of his days, *Prieſts* of *Priapus* and *Baalpheor*. *Johannes Gerſon*, ſpeaking of the Incontinency of the *Prieſts*, ſaith, That it was ſo rooted an Epidemical an Evil, that as things ſtood under the Reign of *Celibacy*, if *Prieſts* were not allow'd the uſe of common Women, they would (in ſeveral places) turn up the Wives and Daughters of their Pariſhioners. Nay, even *Albertus Pighius* and *Dominicus Soto*, as ſtout Aſſertors as they

they were of the *Celibacy*, yet were so ingenious as to confess the Lewdness it occasions. Thus could I from several other Instances of the like Nature, drawn from their own Historians, dilate upon this Subject; As also, by adding the remarkable Instances of the great *Incontinency*, or the un-Chast *Celibate* of several of their *Popes* themselves; as of *Paul* the II. *Sixtus* the IV. *Innocent* the VIII. *Alexander* the VI. *Julius* the II. *Leo* the X. *Paul* the III. *Julius* the III, *&c.* But I forbear this, since raking of Dunghills is an Employment more fit for a *Scavenger*, than a *Gentleman*. That so great Wickedness should ever be practis'd amongst such as serve at the *Altar*, is indeed a thing much to be lamented; but that ever any *Christian Church* should allow and approve of such Practices, is Matter of Astonishment! And yet that the Church of *Rome* does so, is most clear, and manifest. Hence we find it was One of the *German* Grievances,

That

That *such Prieſts as were diſpos'd to live chaſtly, and abhorred this Sin of Uncleanneſs, were compell'd to take Diſpenſations to keep Concubines. Nicolaus de Clemangis* alſo makes the ſame ſort of Complaint; *What a ſtrange thing is it*, ſays he, *That in ſeveral Dioceſes now a days, the Rectors of Pariſhes bargain with their Biſhops for Licenſe to keep Concubines?* That great Angelical Doctor of the Church of *Rome, Thomas Aquinas* (whether from his own Complexion, or no, I know not) ſeems to be ſo great a favourer of this Vice, that he argues for it in a pretty odd ſort of a Manner, in his 4th Book *De Regimine Principum*; *Id facit in Mundo Meretrix*, &c. *A Whore in the World*, ſaith he, *is as the Pump in a Ship, or a Privy in a Palace: Take theſe away, and all will be filled with Stench and Annoyance.* Moſt Incomparable Divinity! Sure if this Rule be true, no place for ſweetneſs can compare with *Rome*, where, by the beſt Computation, are reckon'd Three Thouſand

ſand licens'd *Harlots*, which pay an annual Tribute to his *Holineſs*. But to return to my Subject; ſince it plainly appears, That this Doctrine of the *Celibacy* was never us'd, nor practis'd amongſt the *Chriſtians* of the Primitive Church, how came then this Innovation to be introduced into the Church of *Rome*; *Cui bono*? For what end and purpoſe hath it ſo many Ages been ſo very zealouſly aſſerted? *In promptu Cauſa eſt*, The reaſon is very obvious, and a Man with half an Eye may ſee the Policy of it. This Doctrine then is maintained by the Policy of the *Court* of *Rome*, on purpoſe to make advantage of the *Clergy*, both while they live, and when they dye. Hence their great *Eſpencæus* crys out ſhame of that execrable Cuſtom of indulging *Concubinage* to profeſſors of Chaſtity, at a ſet annual Rate; aſſuring us, That amongſt the vaſt Numbers of Delinquents in this kind, few, or none, ſuffer any other Puniſhment than that of the Pocket.

Pocket. But beſides this, 'tis of great advantage to his *Holineſs*, to diſengage the *Clergy* from all civil Intereſts, and thus to make 'em wholly depend upon the *Court* of *Rome*; Which is a thing cou'd never be effected, ſo long as the *Clergy* gave hoſtages of their fidelity to the Civil Government, by the Intereſts of their Families and Children. And therefore this Invention was cunningly enough contriv'd; That as the old *Roman* Soldiers were forbidden Marriage while they received Pay, leaſt their *Domeſtick Concerns* ſhou'd abate their Courage; So the *Celibacy* of the *Clergy* was ſtrictly enjoin'd, to make 'em more true and hearty to the Intereſt of the *Court* of *Rome*. And the vaſt advantages that accrue to his Holineſs by this one Doctrine of the *Celibacy* of the *Clergy*, is ſcarce to be computed; ſince now the *Church* is the general Heir to all the *Clergy*.

Thus

Thus have I run over those five several Gainful Doctrines in the Church of *Rome*; whereby it is most manifest, That, let 'em pretend what they will, Grandeur and Secular Interest is all they aim at; And therefore let us no longer wonder at this *Priest-Craft* of theirs, but rather conclude with that Ingenious *Cardinal*, who, when the People flockt about him, gave them his Benediction in these Words, **Si decipi vult Populus decipiatur**; *if the People will be deceiv'd, let 'em.* Since then *Interest* has so great an Influence in our spiritual Concerns, no wonder it has so absolute a Dominion over the *Secular* part of the World. Let People therefore talk as long as they please of *Liberty, Property, Conscience,* and the like, all this is nothing but *Cant*; but the main Business and Earnest of the World is *Money, Dominion,* and *Power,* and how to compass those Ends; and not a rush Matter at last, whether it be by *Force,* or by *Cunning,*

ning. *Might* and *Right* are Inſeparable, in the Opinion of the World; and he that has the longer Sword, ſhall never want, either *Lawyers* or *Divines*, to aſſert his Title. In a Word, he that underſtands Mankind aright, (that is, judging Men not as they ſhou'd be, but as they are, and I fear ever will be) ſhall find, That *Private Intereſt* is the ſtring in the *Bears* Noſe, it is *that* Governs the *Human Beaſt*. To conclude then, There's not any Corruption in Nature, but Money (another Word for *Intereſt*) is at one end of't; the whole World is under the Dominion of it; for all Things under the Sun are Bought and Sold:

Our *Iron* Age is grown an Age of *Gold*;
'Tis who bids moſt; for all Men wou'd be Sold.

DRYD. *Amphytr.*

ESSAY II.

The great Miſchief and Prejudice of LEARNING; *And that a Wiſe Man ought to be preferr'd before a Man of* LEARNING.

LEARNING does but ſerve to fill us full of Artificial Errors. That which we ſo much admire under the Name of *Learning*, is only the knowing the Fancies of Particular Men, *Deliri veteris Meditantes Somnia vana*, in effect but like *Goſſipping* Women, telling one another their Dreams. Moſt of the Pretenders to *Learning* are meer *Plagiaries*; they do but *Copy* one after another; and methinks it is but a poor eaſie *Knowledge* that can be learnt from an *Index*; and a mean Ambition to be rich in the Inventory of anothers Treaſure. Thus have we not ſeen ſome, even of

of our *Firſt rate* Writers, that have been better at Diſguiſing other People's Works, than furniſhing anything of their Own; That is to ſay, upon the taking them to pieces, the *Stuff* and *Trimming* is found to be wholly ſtolen, and new Furbiſh'd; and, Nothing (in ſhort) that they can aſſume to themſelves, but the *Needle* and *Thread* that tackt the *Compoſition* together. Many (therefore) who affect to be thought Men of *Learning*, may very properly be compar'd to *Æſop's Daw*, which is a true *Type* of a *Plagiary*; for he makes himſelf fine with the Plunder of all Parties: He is a *Smuggler* of *Wit*, and ſteals Fancies without paying the Cuſtomary Duties. Whatever he Writes, may properly be call'd his *Manufacture*; for it is more the Labour of his *Finger* than his *Brain*. In ſhort, There is not a ſimpler Animal, and a more ſuperfluous Member of a State than a *meer Scholar*: He is *Telluris inutile Pondus*. And were I to give a deſcription of a *Pedant*,

newly arriv'd from the *Univerſity*, I cou'd not do it more to the Life, than in the Words of *Horace*:

Cùm Septem Studijs annos dedit, inſenuitq;
Libris & Curis, Statua taciturnior exit
Plerumq; & Populum riſu quatit.——

No wonder then, that the *Italians*, in their *Farces*, always bring in a *Pedant* for the Fool of the Play.

The *Romans* alſo were ſo far from eſteeming *Learning*, as an eſſential part of Wiſdom, that with them the Word *Scholar* was ſeldom us'd but by way of Reproach. That *Learning* is no way ſerviceable to the Life of Man, even daily experience ſufficiently ſhews; for how many are there in the World, of high and low Condition, that live pleaſantly and happily, who never trouble themſelves with *Learning*. Neither is it

ſerviceable to things Natural, which an ignorant Sot may as well perform, as he that is veſted with the greateſt *Learning*; Nature is a ſufficient Miſtreſs for that. Nor doth it conduce to Honeſty, and to make us Better; *Paucis eſt Opus literis ad bonam Mentem*, little Learning is requiſite for a good Mind: Nay, ſome are of Opinion, it rather hinders it; And that where *Learning* and Knowledge go in the *Front*, Pride and Ambition always follow in the *Rear*. Hence it is obſerv'd, That *Rome* for the firſt five hundred Years, when it flouriſh'd in Virtue and Valour, was without *Knowledge*; but as ſoon as *Learning* came amongſt them, they then began to degenerate, and to run into Factions. The beſt eſtabliſh'd Government that ever was, and from whence have Sprung the greateſt Perſonages in the World, I mean the *Lacedemonian*, did in no ſort pretend to *Learning*: And yet it was the School of Virtue and Wiſdom, and was ever Victorious

over *Athens*, the moſt *Learned* City of the World, the School of all Science, the Habitation of the Muſes, and the Storehouſe of Philoſophers. *Learning* then ſerves for nothing, but to invent Niceties and Subtilties, artificial cunning Devices, and whatſoever is an Enemy to Vertue and Innocence. Atheiſm, Errors, Sects, and all the Troubles of the World, have riſen from the Men of *Knowledge* and *Learning*: 'Tis *Learning*, I ſay, which has enabled them for thoſe Quirks and Subtilties, of which groſſer Underſtandings wou'd have remain'd more happily ignorant. If we ſearch into the *Morals* of the moſt *Learned* amongſt the *Heathens*, I mean their *Philoſophers*, we ſhall find but little agreement betwixt their Practices and their Doctrines. And that the one did generally run counter to the other. *Plutarch* tells us, That not only *Socrates* and *Plato*, but alſo the reſt of the *Philoſophers*, notwithſtanding their outward ſhew and oſtentation of

of ſome Vertues, were generally as Intemperate, Incontinent, and Wicked, as any common or ordinary Slave. We are likewiſe told from very good Authority, That *Ariſtotle* did by no means live up to the Rule of his own *Ethicks*; as being guilty of great Vanity in his Clothes, of Incontinency, and Unfaithfulneſs to his Maſter *Alexander*, &c. Nay, what ſhall we ſay, if our great *Seneca*, that Man of *Morals*, had his Vices and Enormities? Whom notwithſtanding St. *Jerom* would have Canoniz'd for a *Saint*; yet if what *Dion Caſſius* and other Authors of Note, ſay of him be true, I am ſure he did but little deſerve it. We contemn, ſays *Minutius Felix*, the proud Looks of the *Philoſophers*, whom we have known to be Corrupters of Youth (or *Sodomites*) and *Adulterers*, and *Tyrants*, and always eloquent againſt their own Vices. *Grotius* in his *Annotations* on *Epheſ.* 5. v. 6. informs us, That the Sin of *Sodomy* was generally allow'd by

the *Philoſophers*. And the *ſame Author* on 1 *Cor.* 5.2, aſſures us, That both the *Cynicks* and *Stoicks* judged *Inceſt* amongſt their Ἀδιάφορα, *Things Indifferent*. Thus we ſee notwithſtanding the ſpecious Pretentions, & affected Gravity of theſe *muſty Moraliſts*, the *Antient Philoſophers*, their Lives were no way correſpondent to their Doctrines, nor did their *Practiſes* hold an equal pace with their *Theory*. ——*Video meliora, proboque; Deteriora ſequor.* We naturally know what is *good*, but naturally purſue what is *Evil*. And as the *Philoſophers* were defective in their *Morals*; ſo I do not find, they had any great Stock of ſolid Learning. St. *Auſtin* tells us, in his *Epiſt.* 131. That all the Knowledg and *Learning* of the *Philoſophers*, was nothing elſe but jangling Sophiſtry, Towers built in the Air, proud Error and curious Lies. We may eaſily gather from *Tully* and *Laertius*, what a ſmall Proportion of ſolid Learning theſe *Philoſophers* were Maſters

ſters of; Their Controverſies were infinite, their Diſſentions endleſs, and irreconcileable, about no leſs Matters than the *Soveraign* and *Chief Good*, nay and about *God* himſelf; holding concerning the *firſt*, 288 ſeveral Opinions, and 300 about the *latter*. Many of their *Summum Bonums* that they preſented us with, were only fit to entertain a *Brute*, tho others indeed were noble enough for a Spirit of the higheſt Order. I could not tell where to ſtop ſhould I relate the Differences one Sect had with another, their Inconſiſtences with themſelves, and the ridiculous and ill ſupported *Tenets* ſome of the moſt famous of them have held. And therefore well might *Tully* obſerve, as he did, That there was ſcarce any Opinion in Nature ſo groſs, abſurd, or ridiculous, but was aſſerted and maintain'd by ſome *Philoſopher* or other. 'Tis to be confeſs'd, *They* had a great Command of Words, and withal a good Stock of Aſſurance, and ſo were better able to *Harangue*

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and *Diſpute* it, than the common People; they could talk more plauſibly about that they did not underſtand; but ſtill their *Learning* lay chiefly in Flouriſh, and Terms, and Cant; for as for any real Improvements in Science, they were not much wiſer than the leſs pretending Multitude. But after I have ſaid this, I can by no means deny, but that ſome of theſe *Philoſophers* were Men of excellent Wits, and great Natural Parts; yet, I ſay, the way they took was not like to bring much Advantage to *Knowledg*, or any of the Uſes of *Humane Life*; being for the moſt part that of *Notion* and *Diſpute*, which ſtill runs round in a *Labyrinth* of *Talk*, but advanceth nothing. It was a moſt perverſe Cuſtom amongſt the *Diſciples* of the Ancient *Philoſophers*, not to make any *ſtrict Choice*; to leave ſome and embrace others of their Maſters Doctrines, but to ſwallow all at once. Thus he that became a *Stoick*, an *Epicurean*, a *Peripatetick*,

patetick, in *Logic*, or *Moral Philoſophy*, or *Phyſicks*; never ſtuck preſently to aſſent to whatever his *Founder* had ſaid in all the other Sciences; tho there was no kind of Connexion between his Doctrine in the *one* and the *other*. Thus was the whole Image of *Philoſophy* form'd in their Minds altogether: And what they receiv'd ſo careleſly, they defended the ſame way; not in parcels, but in groſs. No wonder then, ſince they took this unadviſed Method, that they often ſlipt into ſuch groſs Errors and Miſtakes. Hence therefore, if we look back into the firſt Ages of the Church, we ſhall find, That *Philoſophy* was the chief Seminary of the main Errors broach'd in thoſe times. And this (no doubt) *Tertullian* was highly ſenſible of, which made him ſtyle the *Philoſophers*, the *Patriarchs* of *Hereticks*. And *Cornelius Agrippa* ſays, That nothing more adulterates *Divinity* than *Philoſophy*; ſoraſmuch as all Hereſy whatſoever hath had it's

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firſt Riſe out of the Fountain of *Philoſophy*. The Primitive Fathers of the Church, were wont to apply themſelves with great diligence to the Study of Heathen *Philoſophy*, on purpoſe to enable them to fight the *Heathens* with their own Weapons, and to baffle them with their own Arguments. Whereupon they chiefly conſulted the *Philoſophy* of *Ariſtotle* and *Plato*; but chiefly *Plato*'s; becauſe that ſeem'd to ſpeak plainer about the *Divine Nature*; and alſo, becauſe the Sweetneſs and Powerfulneſs of *Plato*'s Writings, taught 'em at the ſame time the Art of Speaking and the Strength of Reaſoning. Having thus provided themſelves againſt their Adverſaries, they eaſily got the Victory over them; For tho the *Heathens* for ſo many hundred Years, had very zealouſly aſſerted the Truth of their ſeveral Religions; yet now their *Philoſophers* were ſo baffl'd by theſe *Chriſtian Doctors*, that they had nothing to ſay; and at laſt were ſo ingenious,

nious, as to confeſs the ridiculouſneſs of *their* Religions, and to own the purity and reaſonableneſs of the *Chriſtian* Worſhip. And now, after ſo good a Beginning, who could expect ſo unhappy a Concluſion? For it ſo fell out, That the *Chriſtians* having had ſuch good Succeſs againſt the Religions of the *Heathens*, by their own Weapons; inſtead of laying them down when they had done, unfortunately fell to manage them one againſt another. So many ſubtle Brains having been ſet on work, and heated againſt a Foreign Enemy; when that was over, and they had nothing elſe to do (like an Army that returns victorious, and is not preſently disbanded) they began to ſpoyl and quarrel amongſt themſelves. Hence that Religion, which at firſt appear'd ſo innocent and peaceable, and fitted for the Benefit of Human Society, was miſerably divided into a thouſand intricate Queſtions, which neither advance true Piety, nor good Manners,

ners. And from hence ſprung up the firſt *Hereſies* in the Church. I know it was the Policy of *Julian* to ſhut up the Fountains of *Human Learning* from the *Chriſtian Youth*, leaſt they ſhould by that means become Maſters of ſuch acuteneſs, as might render them the more formidable Adverſaries to *Paganiſm*: But cou'd he have foreſeen, that they would have employ'd thoſe Weapons, not ſo much againſt the common Enemy, as one againſt another; he would ſurely have revers'd the Stratagem, and freely have open'd thoſe *Magazines*, whence they might furniſh themſelves for their mutual Ruin, and have as ſolicitouſly promoted their *Learning*, as ever he obſtructed it. And thus we ſee how little *Religion* is promoted, or advantag'd by *Human Learning*, which the Apoſtle ſufficiently inculcates, when he ſo wiſely adviſes us, *to avoid all vain Philoſophy.*

And as *Learning* is of little Uſe in making Men truly *Religious*; ſo

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it likewiſe ſignifies but little in the making us either good *Subjects*, or great *Politicians*. *Licinius* and *Valentinian*, Emperors of *Rome*, were wont to ſay, That their State had no Poyſon more dangerous than that of *Learning*. *Lycurgus* alſo ſeem'd to be of the ſame opinion, when he eſtabliſht Ignorance in his Republic. Moſt Men do attribute the Greatneſs of the *Grand Seigneur*'s, and the Duke of *Muſcovy*'s Power over their *Subjects*, to this one ſingle piece of *Policy*, *viz.* Their ſuppreſſing of *Literature*. And do we not ſee here in *England*, That, in time of *Popery*, when that little Stock of *Learning* that was amongſt us, was cloiſter'd up in Monaſteries and Abbeys, the ignorant Common People patiently crouch'd, and readily bore whatſoever burden was put upon 'em. But as ſoon as ever Learning peept abroad in the World, and began to diffuſe it ſelf, amongſt the *Vulgar*: They then began to expoſtulate with their Superiors, and immediately

ately threw off that Yoke, which formerly they and their Fore-fathers had ſo long lain under. And indeed upon this Conſideration it is, that Princes take ſo much Care to keep their Subjects in Ignorance, by ſuppreſſing all ſuch Books, as lay open and proſtitute the *Arcana Imperii* to the Knowledg of the Vulgar. For Books give Men new Hints and Notions, and thoſe Notions do often put Men upon ſuch Actions, as are not always agreeable to the Intereſts of Princes. Hence that ſubtle and crafty Prince, King *James* (I mean the *Firſt*, not the *Second*) would often ſay, That *of all ſorts of Subjects the Thinking Man made the Worſt.* And even by daily Experience we find it confirm'd, That the High-flown *Arbitrary* Men (commonly the Darlings of Tyrants) are not Men of the deepeſt Thoughts, nor of the greateſt Foreſight and Conſideration; ſince if they were, they might eaſily diſcover, That the Abſolute Power of the Prince cannot be

be made up of any other Ingredient, than the Slavery of the Subject. Whereas in all Great and Noble Souls (*Queîs Meliore luto finxit præcordia Titan*) there is an inbred Love to Liberty: And certainly they work by a wrong *Engine*, who ſeek to gain their *Ends* by Conſtraint. The croſſing two *Lovers* knits but their Affection the Stronger, and makes it burn with the greater Heat. You may ſtroke the *Lion* into tameneſs, but you ſhall ſooner hew him into pieces, than *beat* him into a Chain. I have known ſeveral, whom the greateſt Importunity could never prevail with to take up their Glaſs, when at the ſame time, give 'em but their *Liberty*, and they would be the firſt Men drunk in the Company. In ſhort, the nobleſt Weapon wherewith *Man* can conquer, is Love and Good Nature. For, generally Speaking, 'tis with *Men*, as 'tis with *Trouts*, the ſureſt way to *take* 'em, is to *tickle* 'em. In a Word, 'tis *Liberty* alone which inſpires Men with

Lofty Thoughts, and elevates their Souls to the higheſt pitch: Whereas a Man that is under any Reſtraint, and in a State of Dependency, has preſently a Damp ſtruck upon his Genius, his Thoughts are overaw'd, and the range of his Fancy totally diſorder'd. And for this reaſon it was, That *Parmenio* could not riſe up to *Alexander's* Height of *Thinking*, becauſe he was under his Command. 'Tis *Longinus's* Obſervation That there were no conſiderable *Orators* in *Greece* after their Government was alter'd by the *Macedonians* and *Romans*. According to *him*, their *Elocution* and their *Freedom* ſeem'd to languiſh and expire together. When they were once *enſlav'd*, the *Muſes* ſcorn'd to keep 'em Company any longer. Thus then we find That we cannot continue long in the Condition of *Slaves*, but we muſt degenerate into the Habits and Temper that is natural to that Condition, Our Minds will grow low with our Fortune, and by being accuſtomed

med to live like *Slaves*, we ſhall become unfit to be any thing elſe: *Etiam fera Animalia ſi clauſa teneas virtutis obliviſcuntur*, ſays *Tacitus*, The fierceſt Creatures by long Conſtraint, loſe their Courage. And I remember, 'tis the Obſervation of that noble Author, Sir *Francis Bacon*, That the Bleſſing of *Iſſachar*, and that of *Judah*, falls not upon one People, to be *Aſſes* crouching under *Burthens*, and at the ſame time to have the Spirit of *Lions*. And with their *Courage* 'tis no wonder if they loſe their *Fortune*, as the *Effect* with the *Cauſe*, and act as ignominiouſly abroad, as they ſuffer at home. *Machiavel* obſerves, That the *Roman* Armies that were always victorious under *Conſuls*; all the while they were under the Slavery of the *Decemviri* never proſper'd. And certainly, People have reaſon to fight but faintly, where they are to gain the Victory againſt themſelves, when every ſucceſs ſhall be a Confirmation of their

Slavery, and a new link to their Chain. Since therefore *Liberty* is a thing ſo highly valued by Mankind, and in all Ages has been ſo; no wonder then, that the wiſeſt *Princes* have been for granting to their Subjects the greateſt *Liberty*; allowing them even the freedom to ſpeak whatever they had a mind to. And this was ſo far from being any prejudice to the *Prince*, that it was really the greateſt Advantage imaginable to him. *Auguſtus Cæſar*, one of the Happieſt and Greateſt *Princes* that the Sun ever ſaw, when he was told at any time, That even his own Perſon and *Edicts* were too boldly diſcourſt of in *Rome*, was wont to ſay, *In Civitate liberâ linguas quoque Civium liberas eſſe oportere*: That in a free State or City, Mens Diſcourſes ought alſo to be free, and without Reſtraint. And this Candid Profeſſion of his, might poſſibly be no mean Ingredient in the Compoſition of his own Felicities. *Thuanus* writing to the great

great *Henry* the 4th of *France*, unto other Praiſes of that *Prince's* Reign, adds this, as none of the meaneſt, *ea eſt, Domine, rara tuorum temporum fælicitas, in quibus unicuique ſentire qnæ velit, & quæ ſentiat eloqui licet*: Such (Grear Sir) is the rare Happineſs of your Times, that in them every Man may think what he pleaſes, and ſpeak what he thinks. And of the ſame Complexion was that Serene Age, in which the Excellent Emperour *Trajan* reign'd as *Cornelius Tacitus* (who was then living) affirms, from whom the ſaid *Thuanus* ſeems to have borrowed the very individual Words before recited. The Lord *Bacon* very wiſely noteth, that ſuch *Liberties* do oftentimes give vent and diſcharge to Popular Diſcontentments; and beſides, the *Prince* is thereby inſtructed in what part the *Subject* is pinch'd, and griev'd, when perhaps he ſhall attain this Information no other Way. And to the ſame Effect does the learned *Selden* tell us, That tho' ſome

make ſlight of *Libels*, yet you may ſee by them how the Wind ſits; as take a Straw, and throw it up into the Air, you ſhall ſee by *that* which way the Wind is; which you ſhall not do by caſting up a *Stone*. In ſhort, *ſaith he*, more Solid things do not ſhew the Complexion of the *Times* ſo well, as *Lampoons* and *Libels*. But as valuable as *Liberty* is to moſt Men, yet in ſome tempers there is ſuch a Natural Love to Servitude and Vaſſallage, that they think no pleaſure Comparable to the Hugging of their Chain; and with the Slaviſh *French Man*, their greateſt Glory is, *Noſtre Roy eſt Abſolu*, the Grammatical conſtruction whereof is, *We are Slaves*. But, God be thanked, this is not the Character of our Country-men; They have ſtill known better things: For never was any Nation under the Sun more tenacious of their Properties, and by Conſequence greater Aſſerters of their *Liberties* than the *Engliſh*, and that even in the moſt bigotted

gotted Times of *Popery*. And nothing can be a greater Teſtimony of the Truth hereof, than the great Care our *Anceſtors* took in defending that inviolable Bulwark of our *Liberties* and *Properties*, the **Magna Charta**, or **Great Charter** of *England*; a *Charter* purchaſt with the *Treaſures*, and ſeal'd with the *Bloud* of our *Anceſtors*. A *Law* promulg'd and eſtabliſht to the *Engliſh*, with a Terror and Solemnity, inferiour only to *that* of the *Holy Commandments* by God himſelf to the *Jews*. There was here no *Thunder* or *Lightning* it's true; but there was ſo dreadful a Fulmination of Curſes upon the Violaters thereof, that no Man ever yet conſider'd them without Horror and Aſtoniſhment. A *Law* rever'd by former *Parliaments* to that Degree, that they enacted Tranſcripts thereof to be carefully preſerv'd in all the *Cathedrals* of the Realm: That it ſhould be four times a year publickly read before the People. That twice in the Year the *Prelacy* ſhould

Thunder out the greater Excommunication againſt the Infringers thereof. That the Lord *Chancellor*, and all the great Miniſters of State, upon entry into their Offices, ſhould conſtantly be Sworn to the Obſervation thereof. Nay that the *Prieſts* and *Confeſſors* ſhould frame the Conſciences of the People to the Obſervance thereof. And Laſtly, a *Law* confirm'd by no leſs than Thirty Two ſeveral Acts of Parliament. And (now) what was the Reaſon of all this *Veneration* and *Carefulneſs*? Was this **Charter** of that *Sanctity* and *Importance*? Yes ſurely, This *Bulwark* was then thought as neceſſary to the *Engliſh*, as that of the *Palladium* to the *Trojans*, the *Holy Ark* to the *Hebrews*, or the *Sea-Banks* to the State of *Holland*. In Company of this *Tutelar*, there could be no Danger; and in the Abſence thereof, there could be no Safety. Such *then* was the Care of our *Anceſtors*, in the fencing about of their *Rights* and *Properties*. And ſo invincible was their Zeal to tranſmit

mit these *Jewels* to their Posterities, with the same *Lustre* and *Beauty*, that they themselves had receiv'd them from their Predecessors. These old *English Heroes* seeming to me to bear always in mind that Gallant saying of *Galaacus*, (our Countrey Man and a great Captain) when his Army was in the Instant of joyning Battle here with the *Roman* Invaders: *Et Majores vestros, & Posteros Cogitate*; **Fellow Soldiers**, saith he, **Remember your Ancestors, and Posterities.** An Expression so weighty and significant, that, if it were possible, it ought to be Writ with a Quill drawn from the Wing of a *Cherubim*. And now, that ever any who call themselves *English Men*, should sink into such a meanness of Spirit, so degenerating from the Virtues of their *Ancestors*, as to give up at one Breath our *English Liberties*, is that, which as our Forefathers could never have dreamt of; so, for the Honour of the present Age, I hope Posterity will never remember. But Monsters

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are the Product of every Age; and there is no Climate without ſome Inſects. Tho *Liberty* (as I have ſaid) be the Miſtreſs of all generous Souls, and is that alone which gives a Reliſh to Human Life: yet, I ſay, there hath been lately found amongſt us a ſort of *Animals* who have been as Induſtrious in giving up, as ever our Noble Progenitors were in eſtabliſhing our *Liberties*. But whatſoever Charms, theſe the more Groſs, and earthly part of Mankind, may think there is in ſuch a Lazy, ſlaviſh Subjection; yet to Men of more refined Intellectuals, and whoſe Veins run with a Nobler Sort of Blood, all that the World can give without *Liberty* hath no Taſt. It muſt be confeſs'd, That in the two laſt Reigns, this precious *Jewel* of *Liberty*, hath been little valued; nothing hath been Sold ſo Cheap by *Unthinking* Men: But alaſs that doth no more leſſen the real value of it, than the Ignorance of the Fooliſh *Indians* did that of their

their *Gold*; which at firſt they exchang'd for the moſt inconſiderable Bawbles. 'Tis the Happineſs of our Conſtitution, That *King* and *People* are both bounded; and Curſt be the Man, who ſhall go about to remove either of theſe Land Marks: The *Crown* hath *Prerogative* enough to protect our *Liberties*; and the *People* have ſo much *Liberty*, as is neceſſary to make them uſeful to the *Crown*: So that the King's *Prerogative*, and the Subjects *Liberty*, do naturally tend to the Preſerving one another: It was the Obſervation of that learned Attorney General, Sir *Francis Bacon*, That whileſt the *Prerogative* runs within its ancient and proper Banks, the main Channel thereof is ſo much the ſtronger; for Over-flows evermore hurt the River.

Certainly, it was no ill ſaying of *Pliny* the younger, to *Trajan* the Emperour, *Fælicitatis eſt poſſe quantum velis, Magnitudinis velle quantum poſſis*, It is an Happineſs for your Majeſty

Majeſty to be able to do what you will, but your Greatneſs conſiſts in doing what you juſtly may. And *Comines* (that Honeſt *French* States-Man) notes, That it is more Honourable for a *King* to ſay, *My Subjects are ſo Good and Loyal as to deny me nothing*; than to ſay, *I take what I pleaſe, and I will keep it.* And thoſe Courtiers that preach any other Doctrin, do not a little miſtake the Intereſt of their Maſters, and are ſo far from exalting their Grandeur and Prerogative, that they make 'em indeed no Kings. For, as *Bracton* ſays, *Non eſt Rex ubi dominatur Voluntas*; It is not a King, where Will and Pleaſure bears Sway; but rather ſome *Cyclopick Monſter*, which eats and drinks the Fleſh and Blood of Mankind. Nay, even King *James* the I. (that high Aſſerter of Prerogative) in his Speech in the Star-Chamber, *Anno* 1609. ſaith, That no ſooner does a King give over Governing according to *Law*, but he ceaſes to be a *King*, and degenerates

rates into a *Tyrant*. And the Lord Chancellor *Bacon* tells us, That the People of this Kingdom love the *Laws* thereof, and nothing will oblige 'em more, than a Confidence of the free enjoying them. What the *Lords* upon an Occaſion once ſaid, **Nolumus Leges Angliæ Mutari**, we will not have the *Laws* of *England* alter'd, is imprinted upon the Hearts of all *Engliſh Men*, who take themſelves to have as good a Title to their *Laws*, as to the Common Air they breath in. And therefore Sir *Walter Raleigh* (a Man of no Vulgar Obſervations) tells us a great Thing, and in no wiſe to be ſlighted, That *the Kings of* England *have evermore ſuſtained more loſs by one Rebellion, than by a hundred years Obſervance of* **Magna Charta.** 'Tis obſerv'd of the *Camel*, that it lies quietly down till it hath its full Load, and then riſeth up; but the *Engliſh Mobile* is a kind of *Beaſt*, which riſeth up ſooneſt, when it is over-loaden. And therefore

therefore (to Conclude this Point) as an *Engliſh Monarch* may (ſo long as he obſerves the *Laws*) be the Happieſt Prince in the World; ſo if he will turn *Phaeton*, and drive furiouſly, he will in the end find himſelf a King not of *Men*, but of *Devils*. And this brings to my Mind the Obſervation of a great Man, *viz.* That that which had in all Ages kept the *Engliſh* ſo Free a People, and from being Enſlav'd like ſome of their Neighbouring Nations, was (next to Gods particular Goodneſs) that natural Churliſhneſs, and Roughneſs of Temper, which is inherent in a true right *Engliſh* Man. This Character may (poſſibly) ſeem to bear a little hard upon us: But let us ſet the *Good* againſt the *Bad*, and for my part I think (if from ſo bad a *Cauſe* we have found ſo good an Effect) we have no reaſon to Repine, but be Thankful. And beſides who knows but the ſame Obſervation may hold true in *Men*, which is in *Metals*, That

thoſe

thoſe of the ſtrongeſt and nobleſt Subſtance, are hardeſt to be Poliſht. But begging Pardon for this long Digreſſion, I ſhall now proceed:

That Men of *Learning* are not always the Greateſt *Politicians*, even the Experience of all Ages does ſufficiently ſhew; That great and learned Antiquary Mr. *Selden* informs us, That when *Conſtantine* became *Chriſtian*, He had ſo great an Affection for the *Clergy*, that he put good part of the Civil Government into their Hands; but after three or four years Experience, he was very ſenſible how fatal this Error had like to have been: Whereupon he took new Meaſures; and in the Poſts of theſe unhappy *Politicians*, he was fain to put in a ſet of *Lay-Men*, who having truer and better Notions of Government, ſoon corrected, and amended *Their* Errors and Miſtakes. That the *Clergy* of *England* have ſince the Reformation been much abridg'd of their former Power, is what I think

think every Man will grant. And therefore, that ſuch of 'em as love to be Great and Powerful, have ſtill a hankering after that old Conſtitution, I, for my part, cannot ſo much admire. But how comes it, that the *Clergy* are not *now* allow'd to have as great Power, as in times of *Popery*? The reaſon is very apparent; becauſe we found by Experience, That when they were veſted with ſuch great Power, no ſort of Men ever carried it more Arbitrarily, and Tyrannically, nor (indeed) committed greater Soleciſms in *Politicks* than they did: And therefore the Hiſtory of thoſe times does ſufficiently warn us againſt runing into the ſame Error. When Men act out of their own Sphere, who can expect any good will come of it? Hence we find, it ſeldom happens, That the *States Men* are more Fortunate in medling with Religion, than the *Church Men* with State-Affairs. They both mar all with Tampering out of their Province. *Chriſt's* Kingdom

dom is not of this World; nor ought the Divines πραγματεύειν, to meddle in this *Political* Province; and when they do, God knows no ſort of Men proves ſo Unfortunate. Let us hear what the Ingenious *Andrew Marvel* ſays, as to this Point. "Whether it be, that the Clergy "are not ſo well fitted by Education, "as others for Political Affairs, I "know not; tho' I ſhould rather "think (*ſaith he*) they have advan- "tage above others, and if they "wou'd but keep to their Bibles, "might make the beſt Miniſters of "State in the World; yet 'tis gene- "rally obſerv'd, That Things miſ- "carry under their Government. "If there be any Counſel more pre- "cipitate, more violent, more rigo- "rous, more extream than other, "that is *theirs*. Truly I think, the "reaſon God does not bleſs 'em in "Affairs of State, is becauſe he ne- "ver intended 'em for that Employ- "ment. Or, if Government, and "the Preaching of the Goſpel, may

" well concur in the ſame Per-
" ſon, God therefore fruſtrates him,
" becauſe, tho' knowing better, he
" ſeeks and manages his Greatneſs
" by the leſſer and meaner Max-
" ims.

Upon theſe therefore, and ſuch like Conſiderations, the Wiſe *Venetians* have ſo ſlight an Opinion of the *Politicks* of their Church Men, that whenever any thing that is of a conſiderable Nature, occurs to be debated in the *Senate*, before any ſuffrage paſſeth, they cauſe Proclamation to be made, for all *Prieſts* to depart: And the proper Officer, with a loud and audible Voice, pronounceth theſe Words, *Fuora i Preti, Out Prieſts.* And it is further Remarkable, That he who in this Common-Wealth is call'd the *Divine of the State* (an Eccleſiaſtical Perſon to be advis'd with in Matters of Religion) is commonly choſen ſuch a One, as is reputed the leaſt addicted to *Bigottry.* It is the general Obſervation of the moſt Faith-

ful

ful Hiſtorians, That the *Clergy* in all Ages have been the greateſt Promoters of thoſe civil Diſtempers and Contentions, that have every where ſhak'd the Foundations of *Church* and *State*; ſo that as a *Catholick* noted, There hath been no Floud of Miſery, but did ſpring from, or at leaſt was much ſwell'd by their *Holy Water*. Thoſe *Torches* that ſhould have been for ſaving Light, have ſtill degenerated into Firebrands; thoſe *Trumpets* that ſhou'd have ſounded Retreats to Popular Furies have never known any other Muſick than *Martial All-Arms*. But God defend our *Pulpits* from ſuch *Bouteſeus*, as like *Ætna* and *Veſuvius* belch out nothing but Flames and Fiery Diſcourſes. Certainly, if theſe Men ever think to merit Heaven, it muſt be by an *Antiperiſtaſis*. But in a Word, when the Men of the *long Robe* have once preach'd the People to *Tinder*, the leaſt Spark then ſets 'em on Fire. And therefore, let any Man but read

the Hiſtory of *Chriſtendom*, and he will find, that moſt of the Quarrels in this part of the World have ſprung from the *Pulpit*, and that the *Clergy* were the *Porcupiſces* that portended the Storm. That no ſort of Men have prov'd more fatal in their Counſels to Princes than the *Political Divines*, is a truth too much confirm'd, by Experience to be deny'd. That which theſe Men cheifly aim at, is to render themſelves acceptable at Court; as knowing that the beſt Preferments come from thence; and therefore, If they can but ſooth and pleaſe the *Prince*, they value not whether their Doctrin be true, or falſe. Hence then their chief buſineſs is, to give a helping hand towards making the *Prince* Arbitrary: And their way to do this, is by Entitling him to all thoſe *Regalia's* or *Prerogatives*, that the Kings of *Juda*, or *Iſrael*, ever enjoy'd, or uſurp'd; as if the *Judicials* of *Moſes* were calculated for all Seaſons, and all Meridians. And thus aroſe that Doctrin,

Doctrin, That *Monarchy* is *Jure Divino*. But this way of Proceeding is no new Invention, for we find it very usual amongst the Ancient *Heathens*, whenever they had a mind to obtrude any odd Belief upon the Common People, they presently trumpt up a *Jus Divinum*; and after this manner we see both their *Laws* and *Religions* were established. Thus *Solon's* Laws were said to come from *Minerva*; *Lycurgus* deriv'd his Laws from *Jupiter*; *Numa Pompilius*, the first Founder of the *Roman* Rites and Ceremonies, declar'd he receiv'd them from the Goddess *Ægeria*; and *Mahomet* pretended his Religion was imparted to him, by the Angel *Gabriel*. There is not any thing whatsoever, that derives so great an Authority amongst Men, as the Opinion of Divine Favour, or Heavenly Designation: And therefore St. *Austin* speaking of that Custom amongst the *Heathen*, of deriving the Pedigree of their *Heroes* from the Gods,

ſays, He lookt upon it to be of great uſe; in as much as it had made Valiant Men, fancying themſelves to be Heaven-born, upon the confidence thereof, to undertake high Attempts the more boldly, intend them the more earneſtly, and accompliſh them the more ſucceſfully. And *Ludovicus Vives* ſays, That another great Advantage which accrued to the *Heroes* by this Beleif, was, the Readineſs which hereupon they found in the Common People to ſubmit to whatſoever they commanded, as thinking their very Commands to be Sacred and Divine. This therefore made *Scipio*, that he cultivated and improved that Opinion of the People, *viz.* That he was begot by ſome *God*; and *Alexander* in *Lucan* tells us, That it further'd him in many great Deſigns, to be accounted the Son of *Jupiter Hammon*; for thereby he was fear'd, and none durſt Oppoſe him, whom they held to be a *God*. Thus we ſee, That that Piece of Policy,

Policy, which many of our Court-Flatterers in the late Reigns have been ſo fond off, *viz.* Their aſſerting *Monarchy* to be *Jure Divino*, is but borrw'd from this old *Heathen* Cuſtom; the Original Deſign whereof was, *firſt*, to flatter the *Prince*, by making him Believe, his Power was abſolute, and his Will was uncontrolable; and the ntoimpoſe upon the *People*, by making them believe, That a Prince (tho a Tyrant, and the very Worſt of Men) was not to be oppos'd, or reſiſted. But from what I have now ſaid, let no Man think I am an Enemy to *Monarchy*; for I do moſt ſolemnly, and unfeignedly Declare, That of all Sorts of Governments, *Monarchy* is the moſt agreeable to my Genius; and that of *Monarchy* the *Pure* and *Unmixt* would pleaſe me beſt (it being *that* by which the *Almighty* governs the *Univerſe*) cou'd human Nature be long truſted with it; and cou'd we be as certain, that his *Vicegerent* on Earth, wou'd as

eaſily imitate thoſe Divine Attributes of *Wiſdom* and *Goodneſs*, as they are prone to lay Claim to his other Attributes of *Power* and *Greatneſs*. But alaſs, *Kings* are but *Men*; they are not exempted from Error; They have their Vices and Infirmities, their Sallies and Enormities, like the reſt of Mankind: And indeed, conſidering the unhappineſs of their Education, and their being continually ſurrounded with *Sycophants*, and Flatterers, 'tis a wonder they prove at the common rate of other Men. Hence therefore that great Man of Wiſdom and Experience, *Phillip de Comines*, tells us, That a *Vertuous Prince is worthy of more than ordinary applauſe*. Thus then, the fault is not in the *Government* as *Abſolute*, but in *humane Nature*, which is not often found Sufficient, at leaſt for above one or two Succeſſions, to ſupport and manage ſo unlimited a Power in one ſingle Perſon as it ought to be. And now to return to my Subject.

Since

Since *Learning* therefore is a thing of ſo little Value, and Uſe to Mankind, as we have made it appear to be; how Vain are Thoſe, who extol it to ſuch a Degree, as to make it the Standard both of *Happineſs* and *Wiſdom*; by concluding, That no Man can be either Happy or Wiſe without it: Tho' the *Scripture* tells us, That he who encreaſeth in knowledge, encreaſeth in Sorrow; and daily Experience ſhews us, That *Folly* and *Learning* do often cohabit in the ſame Perſon. The ingenious *Montaign*, enquiring into the reaſon why Men of *Learning* do generally ſeem to be more uncouth in their Diſcourſe as alſo more unfit for Buſineſs than other Men, ſaith, *I cannot conceive the true Cauſe hereof, unleſs it be, that as Plants are Choakt by over-much Moiſture, and Lamps are Stifl'd with too much Oil; ſo are the Actions of the Mind overwhelm'd by over-abundance of Matter and Study: And in a diverſity of things, as in a miſt, the Mind*

is apt to loſe it ſelf. Beſides, it often happens. That *Scholaſtick Education*, like a *Trade*, does ſo fix a Man in a Particular way, that he is not fit to judge of any thing that lies out of that way; Indeed, they are ſcarce capable of any other Thoughts; ſo that if a thing be never ſo little out of their Rode, it is altogether free from their Diſcovery! As I have heard of ſome Creatures in *Africk*, which ſtill going a violent pace ſtraight on and not being able to turn themſelves, can never get any Prey, but what they meet juſt in their way. And thus we ſee, that *Learning* is ſo far from contributing to *Wiſdom*, that if it be not well manag'd, it really hinders us in the purſuit of it. And a great Part of that which we call *Learning*, is like *Cobwebs*, which tho' they ſeem fine and Artificial, are of no Manner of uſe. For what is a Man the wiſer for knowing the *Genitive Caſe* of *Jupiter*. Or whether we ſhou'd Write *Fælix*, or *Felix*?

Felix? Or what are we the Better, for knowing how many *Knots* there were in *Hercules*'s Club? Or whether *Penelope* was honeſt or No? And yet as ridiculous as theſe Things are; many of thoſe Men, whom the World hath call'd *Learned*, have trifl'd away their time in theſe, and ſuch like Enquiries. In a Word, it is not the knowing much, but the knowing what is uſeful, makes a Man a Wiſe Man. Suppoſe a Man knows what is *Latin*, *Greek*, *French*, *Spaniſh* or *Italian* for a *Horſe*, this makes the Man no more the *Wiſer*, than the *Horſe* the better: Whereas if the ſame Perſon had but two or three good *Receits* to cure either the *Farcy* or a *Surfeit*, this would be of real Advantage both to the *Maſter* and the *Horſe*. Thus then, if a Man have all other Points of Knowledge and *Learning*, yet if he wants that one of *Sibi Sapere*, all his other Knowledge is but Impertinence, and a Gawdy ſort of Ignorance. There are indeed ſome Men, who are arri-

ved

ved to a ſort of *Lip-Wiſdom*, as I may ſo call it; who have a Knack of talking like *Wiſe* Men; by their Diſcourſe you would judge of 'em, as the Ancient *Heathens* did of their *Heroes*, That they were Sprung from the *Gods*; but if you ſearch into their Actions, you wou'd rather think 'em a Kin to the *Horſe* or *Mule*, which have no underſtanding. *Odi Homines ignavos Operâ, Philoſophos Sententiâ*, was the ſaying of a great Man, *I hate Men that act like Fools, but ſpeak like Philoſophers.* He who *Speaks*, but does not *Act* like a wiſe Man, is at beſt but like a *Tinkling Cymble*, which makes only a pleaſant Noiſe. Certainly, of all Parts of *Wiſdom*, the Practick is the beſt. To conclude then, it is not a Mans cloiſtering himſelf up in his Study, nor his continual Poring upon Books, that makes him a wiſe Man: No, this Property is chiefly to be acquir'd by *Meditation* and *Converſe*. 'Tis true (indeed) Books well manag'd afford

ford mighty Help and Assistance: They strengthen the Organ, and enlarge the Prospect, and give a more universal Insight into Things, than can be learned from *unletter'd* Observation; Whereas he who depends solely upon his own Experience, has but a few Materials to work upon. These Advantages I say, may be had from Books *well manag'd*: But alas! How Few are there that make this use of their *Reading*? Or that really are one jot the better for it? With many Men *Reading* is nothing better than a *dozing* kind of Idleness, and the *Book* is a meer *Opiate*, that makes 'em sleep with their Eyes open. It is us'd for no other purpose, than as an *Antidote* against *Thinking*; and they only look upon it as the most Creditable way for the dismissing of business. Such Mens *Studying* is meerly an Artifice to reconcile the Ease and Voluptuousness of Sloth with the Reputation of Wisdom: A Genteel and Wary kind of *Epicurism*,

curiſm, that ſurfeits without Pain or Shame, and in which Men ſpend their time without Profit to themſelves, or uſefulneſs to the World. Thus then, *Thinking* is ſo abſolutely neceſſary, that *Reading* ſignifies little, or nothing without it. *Thinking* may do without *Reading*, as appears in the firſt Inventers of Arts and Sciences; who were fain to *Think* out their Way to the Receſſes of *Truth*; but the *Other* can never do without this. *Reading* without *Thinking* may indeed make a rich *Common-place*, but it will never enrich the Brain; it may indeed furniſh a Man with great ſtore of *Matter*, but it is ſtill without *form* and *void*, till *Thinking*, like the *Seminal Spirit*, agitates the Dead ſhapeleſs Lump, and works it up into figure and Symmetry.

So much *Reading* then only is uſeful, as will excite a Mans thoughts, as will afford Hints or Sallies to the Mind, or as will furniſh him with Matter for *Meditation* and *Diſcourſe*; which

which two Things are the two great Instruments of Improving our selves, and therefore are to prescribe the Measures of our *Study* and *Reading*. Now *Reading* may very properly be compar'd to *Eating*, and *Thinking* to *Digesting*: as therefore to one Hours Eating, we allow many hours for Digesting; so to one hours *Reading*, we should assign a Sufficient time for Meditating, and Digesting, what we have Read. Or else as the one by breeding ill Humours, and obstructing the Passages, impairs the Health of the Body; So will the *other* be of no less Prejudice to the understanding, by occasioning Diseases to the Mind. A Man therefore may as well expect to grow stronger by always Eating, as Wiser by always *Reading*. Too much over-charges Nature, and as I said before, turns more into *Disease* than Nourishment. 'Tis Thought and Digestion which makes Books Serviceable, and gives Health and Vigour to the Mind.

Mind. Hence therefore it is, that many Men by their *Reading* ſo much and *Thinking* ſo little do inſtead of Improving, really impair themſelves by their Studies. For by over much *Reading* they do but clog and oppreſs their Minds, and ſo digeſt nothing. They ſtuff themſelves ſo full of other Mens Notions, that there is no Room for their own Faculties to diſplay themſelves. Whereas the Man of Thought and Meditation, moves in a larger Sphear; he does not thus *Pinion* his Fancy, but puts it upon the Wing, which ſeldom returns home without ſome Noble *Quarry*. And did Men but know, how much the Pleaſure of *Thinking*, tranſcends all other Pleaſures, they would certainly put a greater Value upon it. 'Tis an happy thing when a Mans Pleaſure is alſo his Perfection: For moſt Mens Pleaſures are ſuch as debaſe their Nature. We commonly gratifie our lower Faculties, our Paſſions, and our

our Appetites: And *these* do not improve, but depress the Mind; and besides, they are so gross that the finest Tempers are Surfeited in a little time. In short, there is no lasting Pleasure but *Contemplation*. All others grow flat and insipid upon frequent use; and when a Man hath run through a set of Vanities, in the Declension of his Age, he knows not what to do with himself, if he cannot *Think*. He saunters about from one dull Business to another, to wear out Time: And hath no reason to value Life, but because he's afraid of *Death*. But *Contemplation* is a continual spring of fresh Pleasures: And nothing is comparable to the Pleasure of an Active and a Prevailing Thought; a Thought prevailing over the Difficulty and Obscurity of the Object, and refreshing the Soul with new Discoveries, and Images of Things, and thereby extending the Bounds of Apprehension; and (as it were) enlarging the Terri-

tories of Reason. But the *Learned* Man that daily plods on in his *Reading*, and never makes use of this *Thinking* Faculty, by reflecting upon what he hath read, quite loseth this *Intellectual Enjoyment*; Nor is he sensible of that *Suavissima Vita*, as the Poet calls it, of *Descending into Himself, and being daily sensible of his own Improvment*: But like the Carriers Horse, he still keeps the old Track; and his *Learning* (to continue the Simile) like the Pack, is but a Burthen to the Beast that carries it. I know, it is generally said, That *Learning* doth conduce much both to the Discovery, and to the Defence of *Truth*, and this indeed I cannot deny; but then at the same time it must be allow'd, That only *Freedom* and *Sincerity*, are fit to be entirely trusted in that Search. For let a Man have never so much *Learning*, yet if he be not allow'd to make a free use of it, but (as is the Common Case of most *Clergy Men*; especially such as are Beneficed,

Beneficed, and have Preferment;) is lyable to be over-aw'd by his Superior for fear of Deprivation, Suspension, or some other Punishment; I say, in that Case, *Learning* gives no Authority to his Opinion. And for this reason, I remember a Person of very great Learning and Judgment us'd to say, That, for his Part, he never valued any of those Books, which came out *cum Permissu Superiorum*, since their Design was rather to promote the Interest of a *Party*, than to advance *Truth*. It is not then to be wonder'd, That the *Clergy* in all Parts of the World, are so very zealous in the Asserting and Defending the several Religions of their Respective Countries; since it is not only their Interest, in hopes of Preferment, so to do; but also, because the Civil Government hath so great a Check upon them, that they durst do no other. Whereas if these Shackles, and Restraints were but taken off, *Learning* would then (beyond all Dispute) be the best,

and moſt proper Vehicle for *Truth*: Whatſoever then hath been ſaid againſt *Learning*, thus much muſt at laſt be acknowledg'd, That when *Learning* meets with an ingenious Temper, and is join'd to a pregnancy of Mind, it is then of excellent uſe, and advantage: For there is no Man but will ſpeak the better, where he knows what others have ſaid upon the ſame Subject. And ſometimes the Conſciouſneſs of his inward Knowledge, gives a graceful Confidence to his outward Behaviour. But on the other hand, if *Learning* happens to be in the poſſeſſion of a Fool, 'tis then but a Bawble, and, like *Dr. Donne's Sun Dial in the Grave*, a Trifle, and of no Uſe.

ESSAY III.

Of EDUCATION *and* CUSTOME.

WE ſuck in the firſt Rudiments as we do the Common Air (*facili hauſtu*) as the Lord *Bacon* expreſſeth it, without *Diſcrimination* or *Election*; of which indeed our tender, and unexercis'd Minds are not capable. And I confeſs, 'tis neceſſary we ſhou'd do ſo; nor were there any hurt in this innocent Eaſineſs, did not moſt Men all their Lives Worſhip the firſt Thing they ſaw in the *Morning* of their Daies, and ever after obſtinately adhere to thoſe unexamined Receptions. But here lies the Miſchief, when we are *Children*, we are apt to

Believe every Thing; and when we are grown *Men*, we ſeldom examine Things, but ſettle in their firſt *Impreſſions*, without giving our ſelves the trouble to conſider, and review them. And theſe Prejudices, by *Cuſtom* and long Acquaintance with our Souls, get a Mighty Intereſt, and become irreſiſtable to every thing that is different from thoſe Images of Education.

Quô ſemel eſt imbuta recens, ſervabit odorem
Teſta diu.——

Said the Heathen Poet, the firſt ſeaſoning Principles and Prejudices, which we receive in our Youth, ſtick cloſely to us for a long time after. *Tully*, I remember, makes mention of a *Muſician*, who being ask'd what the *Soul* was, preſently repli'd, That it was *Harmony*; whereupon *Tully*, being well enough pleas'd with the Anſwer, makes this witty Remark, *Hic à Principiis Artis ſuæ*

non

non receſſit, He knew not how to leave the Principles of his own Art. So likewiſe *Plato's Scholars* had been altogether bred up in *Arithmetick*, and the knowledge *Numbers*; and therefore hence it was that afterwards when they diverted their Studies to the knowledge of *Nature*, or *Moral Philoſophy*; whereſoever they walk'd, or whatſoever they were doing, their Heads were ſtill runing upon *Numbers*. They fancied, the World was fram'd out of *Numbers*; Cities, Kingdoms, and Common-wealths, they thought ſtood by *Numbers*; *Number* with them was *Sole Principle* and *Creator* of every Thing. In a Word, it fares much with us, as it did with *Tully's Muſician*, or *Plato's Scholars*, *Difficulter à Principiis Artis noſtræ recedimus*, 'Tis with much Difficulty that we forſake thoſe *Principles* we have been bred up in. The wiſe Philoſopher tells us, That the *Soul* of Man is *Raſa Tabula*, like a white Sheet of *Paper*, out of which therefore it

must be more than common Art, that can so clear take out the first Writing, as to superinduce a new Copy fair and legible. This is the true Reason, why any Person finds it so difficult to quit those Notions of Religion, which have been establish-ed in his Mind from his early Infancy. There is a Marvellous Agreement and Natural Kindness to those Opinions, which we suck in with our Milk; they are like *Foster-Brothers*, to whom it has been observ'd, There is as strong an Inclination, as to the *Natural*; we play and converse with 'em from our *Cradles* and as soon as we can go alone, we take 'em by the Hand; we sleep with 'em in our Bosoms, and contract an insensible Friendship with 'em, a pleasing Familiarity, which takes off all Deformities; we love 'em, and we like 'em, and their very *Blackness* is a *Beauty*, as it is with the *African* Nations, to whom even that which we judge *Deformity*, appears more lovely, than the most

moſt Delicate *European Beauty*. Thus it was truly ſaid of *Philo*, That *every Mans own Religion ſeem'd to him the beſt, becauſe he judgeth of it not by Reaſon, but by Affection*; like thoſe *Philoſophers* of whom *Cicero* ſpake, who approv'd of no Diſcipline but their own. Hence we find, That the beſt Account many can give of their Faith, is, That they were bred in it; And the moſt are driven to their Religion, by *Cuſtom* and *Education*, as the *Indians* are to *Baptiſm*, that is, like a drove of Cattle to the Water. Thus do we judge all Things by our Anticipations, and condemn or applaud 'em, as they differ, or agree, with our firſt Opinions. 'Tis on this Account, that almoſt every Country cenſures the *Laws*, Cuſtoms, and Doctrins of every other, as abſurd and unreaſonable, and are confirm'd in their own Follies beyond poſſibility of Conviction. In a Word, there's nothing ſo abſurd, to which *Education* cannot form our tender Youth;

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it can turn us into Shapes more Monſtrous then thoſe of *Africk*. For in our *Childhood*, we are like the Melted Wax to the prepar'd Seal, capable of any Impreſſion from the Documents of our Teachers. The *Half Moon* or *Croſs* are indifferent to us; and with the ſame eaſe can we Write on this *Raſa Tabula*, **Turk** or **Chriſtian.** Hence therefore it is, that we find no Religion ſo irrational, but can Boaſt of its *Martyrs*; nor no Opinion ſo ſilly and Ridiculous, but has had ſome *Philoſopher* or other to ſupport and defend it. And becauſe there is not any thing more ſtrange, than the great Diverſity of Laws, and Cuſtoms in the World; I ſhall not here think it impertient to tranſcribe ſome of thoſe, which are moſt Remarkable; as for Inſtance, to account it a moſt Pious and Religious Act, to kill their Parents, when they come to ſuch an Age; and then to eat 'em: In one and the

the ſame Nation, Virgins go with their Privy Parts uncover'd, and Married Women carefully Cover and Conceal them: *Where* Children are excluded, and Brothers and Nephews only inherit: *Where* Chaſtity, in unmarried Women, is in no eſteem; for ſuch may proſtitute themſelves to as many as they pleaſe, and being got with Child, may lawfully take Phyſick to make themſelves Miſcarry; but Married Women keep themſelves Chaſt and Faithful to their Husbands. *Where* the Cuſtom was, that every Bride ſhould be proſtituted to all Comers the firſt Night, and ſhe who had entertained moſt, was moſt Honour'd: *Where* they have no mariages, and therefore Children only own their Mothers, not being able to gueſs at their Fathers: *Where* Bawdy-houſes of young men are kept for the Pleaſure of Women, as there are of Women for the Neceſſities of Men: *Where* the Servile Condition of Women is

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upon with such Contempt, that they kill all the Native Women, and Buy Wives of their Neighbours to supply their Use: *Where* they Boil the Bodies of the Dead, and then dry 'em, and beat 'em to a Powder, which they mix with their Wine, and so drink it: *Where* the greatest Oath they take, is to Swear by the Name of some Dead Person of Reputation, laying their Hand upon his Tomb. *Where* the Ordinary way of Salutation, is, by putting a Finger down to the Earth, and then Pointing it up towards Heaven. *Where* it is the Fashion to turn their Backs upon him they Salute, and never look upon the Man they intend to honour. *Where*, whenever the King Spits, the greatest Ladies of his Court put out their Hands to receive it. And *Where* also the most eminent Persons about him stoop to take up his Ordure in a linnen Cloth. Thus have I Collected, and Copied out

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Several of those Customs, which to me seems the most extravagant and uncouth; Whereby it plainly appears, that there is no Opinion or Imagination so Idle or Ridiculous, which is not establisht by Laws and Customs, in some place or other. Thus, in a word, do we see the mighty Power of *Custom* and *Education*; which is so great that the Rankest Follies are counted Sacred, if Customary; and the *Fashon* is always handsom and agreeable, tho' never so uncouth, or ridiculous to an indifferent beholder. In short, we are civil or uncivil, good or bad, foolish or wise, or any thing else according to *Custom*, which *Erasmus* calls the *Monosyllable Tyrant*, because 'tis term'd *Mos* in Latin; though *Pindar* Stiles her the *Queen* and *Empress of the World*. *Seneca* says, that we govern our selves not by *Reason* but by *Custom*; accounting that most honest, which is most Practis'd; and Error

ſerves us for a Law, when it is become Publick. *Cuſtom* we know is of ſo great account among *Phyſicians*, that according to the great *Hippocrates*, there is no one thing ought more to be regarded: Nay, *ſays he*, whatſoever a Man is us'd to, altho' it be bad, is leſs harmful than what we are not accuſtomed to, altho' in it ſelf it be better. And among the *Lawyers*, we ſee, there is nothing more eſteem'd of than *Cuſtom*: Preſcription is always counted the beſt Title; and the *Common Law*; which is nothing but ſeveral *Cuſtoms* eſtabliſh'd by time and experience, has always the Preference of *Statute Law*, and is eſteem'd the nobler Part. Again, *Cuſtom* governs our very *Affections*; and we love rather by *Cuſtom*, than by *Reaſon*: Hence Mothers more tenderly affect their Children with whom they commonly converſe, more than Fathers do; and Nurſes more than ſome Mothers. *Cuſtom* hath likewiſe ſuch a Power over

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the *Imagination*, that when we are a sleep, we often dream of those Things, which our Minds most run upon when we are awake. And what a mighty Influence has it upon the outward senses? Which may be perceiv'd in those Persons, who (after they have been for some time kept in a dark place) come into a full and open Light; not being able to bear that Luminous Body, which by its glaring seems to dazzle and offend their Sight. And hence it is, That those who live near the *Cataracts* of *Nile*, as also Those several Tradesmen whose Noise displeases us so much, and who dwell in Mills and Forges, *Custom* has made it so familiar to them, that they are no ways disturb'd with this constant Clattering, but rest and sleep as quietly with the Noise, as others do without it. Thus doth *Custom* sufficiently shew its own Force and Power, which is Stronger than Nature, insomuch as it both alters and destroys

Nature,

Nature, and is so Powerful, that it cannot be destroy'd but by it self. To conclude then, the Power of *Custom* is much greater then most Men imagine, and therefore it is that thro' mistake we often call that the *Law of Nature*, which really is but the effect of *Custom*, and *Education*. That Affection, which we say every Man Naturally bears to his own Country, whence comes it? Is it not from *Custom*? I know indeed, some tells us, that this Love to our Native Soil, is by the *Instinct* of *Nature*, as Beasts love their Dens, and Birds their Nests: But I rather think it is from Civil Institution as being accustomed to the same Laws, the same Ceremonies, the same Temples, the same Markets, and the same Tribunals. No wonder then, that the Generality of Mankind is so influenced by *Custom*, since that *Idea* which most Men have of *Truth* and *Reason*, is no other, than what *Custom*, dispenses to 'em. And therefore

therefore it is, that we often are ſo ſtrangely deluded, and impos'd upon. For *Cuſtom* ſays *Mountain veils from us the true Aſpect of Things. Miracles appear'd to be ſo, according to our Ignorance of Nature, and not according to the Eſſence of Nature. The continually being accuſtomed to a thing, blinds the Eye of our Judgment.* It may therefore ſeem ridiculous to think, there is any Common Standard of *Reaſon* amongſt Men; ſince that charms in one Country, which is abhorr'd in others; and the very *Imaginary Lines* which divide *Kingdoms*, ſeem likewiſe to divide their way of *Thinking*, and to make a different *Geography* in the *Reaſon* which they adore, as well as in the Earth on which they trample. Hence then it is, that all Nations are ſo fond of their own *Cuſtoms*: The *Greeks* and *Romans* thought all other Nations *Barbarous* in reſpect of themſelves. The *Italians* call all *Oltramontani* (ſuch as are on this ſide

the Alps) *Barbari*, as tho' none knew what *Civility* meant but they. The *Venetians* will commonly ſay, when they hear a Man ſpeak in a Language which they underſtand not, *Mo, parlate Chriſtiano*, as if no Languge were *Good* and *Chriſtian like* but theirs. The *Chineſes* eſteem themſelves the only Reaſonable and Civiliz'd People, whence it is a Common Proverb amongſt them, that the *Chineſes only ſee with two Eyes, and all other Men but with one.* And thus do *We* ſtill keep up the ſame Humour, by judging all thoſe, who differ from us in their *Cuſtoms* and uſages, to be at leaſt Ridiculous, if not Barbarous. Tho' (after all) the *Barbarians* are no more a Wonder to us, than we are to them; nor (it may be) with any more reaſon. Thoſe *Americans*, who kill their old Decrepit Parents, inſtead of Believing themſelves *Parricides*, call us cruel for letting ours continue ſo long in the Miſeries of old Age. And as for

for that practice of theirs (which to us ſeems ſo unnatural) of eating their own Parents, they think they do thereby give 'em the moſt Noble ſort of *Sepulture*, by burying 'em in their own Bodies, in a manner reviving 'em again, and regenerating them by a kind of *Tranſmutation*, into their living Fleſh by the means of Digeſtion and Nouriſhment. And to ſay the truth, there are many *Laws* and *Cuſtoms*, which ſeem at the firſt view to be Savage, Inhumane, and Contrary to all Reaſon; but if they were without Paſſion and ſoberly Conſider'd; though they were not found to be altogether juſt and good, yet at leaſt they might be plauſibly defended by ſome kind of Reaſon. A wiſe Man therefore ought to ſuſpend his Judgment, and not to be over forward in Cenſuring and Condemning the Practices and *Cuſtoms* of other Nations; which ſort of *Narrowneſs* I find many

are Subject to, and with the *Hermit*, are apt to think, the Sun shines no where, but in their *Cell*: and that all the World is Darkness but themselves. But this certainly is to measure *Truth* by a wrong Standard, and to circumscribe her by too narrow a Scantling. But to proceed: Since *Custom* hath so great a sway in all our Actions, we may well look upon it, as *another Nature*. A *rooted Habit* becomes a governing Principle, and bears almost an equal sway in us with that which is *Natural*. It is (says *Tillotson*) a kind of a *New Nature* superinduced, and even as hard to be expell'd, as some Things which are Primitively and Originally *Natural*. When we bend a Thing at first, it will endeavour to restore it self; but it may be held bent so long, till it will continue so of it self, and grow crooked; and then it may require more force and violence to reduce it to its former Straightness, than we us'd to make it crooked at first.

Mens

Mens minds are naturally of the the same *Clay*; **Education** is the *Potter's* Hand, and Wheel, that forms them into Vessels of Honour and Dishonour. *This* of all humane Means is most Effectual towards the Refining and Sharpening Mens Intellects, giving them an Edge and Quickness; and that the more, because it takes 'em in that Age, wherein their *Faculties* are, as their *Joynts*, pliant and tractable, and so capable of being by Exercise improv'd into great Degrees both of Strength and Activity. In a Word, There is nothing tends more to the forming an Honourable and Vertuous Life, than a good **Education**. Most certain it is, without *this* we are as good as lost in our very Cradles; for whatsoever *Principles* we make choice of in our Infancy, we carry for the most part to our Graves; and in a Word, 'tis the **Education** that makes the Man. With much Elogancy and Smartness, then does the Incompatable *Dryden* tell us:

" By **Education** moſt Men are
" miſled;
" So We Believe, becauſe We ſo
" were Bred:
" The *Prieſt* continues what the
" *Nurce* began;
" And thus the *Child* impoſes on
" the *Man*.

Thus we ſee, that the leaſt falſe Step at the firſt ſetting out, makes us hobble and limp all the journey afterwards. Since **Education** (then) carries ſo great force and Authority along with it, how much does it behove ſuch Parents, who have any regard to Vertue and Wiſdom, to give their Children a Vertuous and ſober *Education*? Tho' indeed this does not always prove ſucceſsful. For *Nero*, notwithſtanding his two excellent Tutors, *Seneca* and *Burrhas*, receiv'd but little Improvement. *Cicero's* Son to the ſtupidity of his Nature, added Drunkenneſs, and returned from *Athens*, and *Cratippus* as arrant

arrant a Blockhead as he went. *Marcus Aurelius* provided fourteen of the moſt approv'd Maſters to Educate *Commodus*, yet could not rectifie his froward and barbarous Humour. Thus, as Sir *Henry Wotton* obſerves, There is in ſome Tempers ſuch a Natural Barrenneſs, that, like the ſands of *Arabia*, they are never to be cultivated or improv'd, And according to the old Proverb, *Ex quovis Ligno non fit Mercurius*—— There are ſome *Crabb-Stocks* of ſuch a Nature, that all the Ingrafting in the World can never Correct or Amend. But theſe Monſters of Nature are not often to be met with: for we uſually obſerve, That the Culture of the *Mind*, as of the *Earth*, doth deliver it from the Barrenneſs of its own Nature: And that the tougheſt, and moſt unbended Natures, by early and prudent Diſcipline, may be much corrected, and improv'd.

ESSAY IV.

Of the ANCIENTS: *The Reſpect that is due to 'em: That we ſhou'd not too much enſlave our ſelves to their Opinions.*

AS we ſhould not be ſo fondly conceited of our ſelves, and the extraordinary Abilities of the preſent Age, as to think every Thing that is Ancient to be obſolute; Or, as if it muſt needs be with *Opinions*, as it is with *Cloths*, where the Neweſt is for the moſt part beſt; ſo neither ſhould we be ſo ſuperſtitiouſly devoted to *Antiquity*, as to take every Thing for *Canonical*, which drops from the Pen of a *Father*, or was approv'd by the Conſent of the *Ancients*. Antiquity is ever venerable, and juſtly

juſtly challenges Honour, and Reverence; but yet there is difference between *Reverence* and *Superſtition*; We may aſſent to 'em as *Ancients*, but not as *Oracles*; They may have our Minds eaſie and inclinable, but there is no reaſon they ſhould have them Captivated and Fetter'd to their Opinions. As I will not diſtruſt all, which without manifeſt proof they deliver, where I cannot convince 'em of Error; ſo likewiſe will I ſuſpend my Belief upon probability of their Miſtakes; and where I find reaſon to *diſſent*, I will rather reſpect *Truth* than *Authority*. As there may be Friendſhip, ſo there may be Honour, with Diverſity of *Opinions*; nor are we bound therefore to *Deifie* Men, becauſe we Reverence 'em. We wrong our *Anceſtors* more by admiring than oppoſing 'em in their Errors; and our Opinion of 'em is very diſhonourable, if we think they had rather have us followers of *Them*, than of *Truth*. Certainly, the greateſt Reſpect

spect we can shew the *Ancients*, is by following their Example: Which was not *Supinely* and *Superstitiously* to sit down in fond Admiration of the Learning of those who were before 'em; but to Examine their Writings, to avoid their Mistakes, and to use their Discoveries, in order to the further improvement of Knowledg. This they did, and never any Man took a greater Liberty in censuring and reproving the supposed Errors and Mistakes of the Elder Philosophers, than *Aristotle* himself; and therefore I do not see any reason why he should be allow'd greater Priviledge, than what he himself thought good to allow to those before him. *Veritas nec Mea est nec illius, aut Ullius*, says St. *Austin*, No Man can say, *I am Infallible*; for as we are *Men*, so we are subject to *Error*. As for the *Truth* of Things, *Time* makes no Alteration; Things are still the same they are, let the Time be *Past*, *Present*, or *to Come*. Those Things which we

we Reverence for *Antiquity*, what were They at their first Birth? Were they false? Time cannot make them True: Were they True? Time cannot make them more True. The circumstance therefore of *Time*, in respect of *Truth* and *Error*, is meerly impertinent. For as *Antiquity* cannot priviledge an *Error*, so *Novelty* cannot prejudice *Truth*. I know in all Ages there have been Those, who with a great deal of Zeal and Elegance have declaim'd against *New Things*, setting forth the great danger of *Alteration* and *Novelty*. But let us not be frightend with shadows: If to be the Author of *New Things*, be a Crime; how will the first Civilizers of *Men*, and Makers of *Laws*, and Founders of *Governments* escape? Whatever now delights us in the Works of *Nature*, that excells the rudeness of the first Creation is *New*; Whatever we see in Cities, or Houses, above the first Wildness of Fields, and Meaness of Cottages, and Nakedness of Men, had its

its time, when this Imputation of *Novelty* might as well have been laid to its Charge. It is not therefore an Offence to introduce *New Things*, unless that which is introduced prove pernicious in it self; or cannot be brought in without the Extirpation of others, that are better. If *Novelty* shou'd always be rejected, neither would Arts have arriv'd to that Perfection, wherein now we enjoy them, nor cou'd we ever hope for any Future Reformation. Tho' all *Truth* be in it self *Eternal*, yet in respect of Mens Opinions there is scarce any so *Ancient*, but had a Beginning, and was once counted a *Novelty*; And if for this Reason it had been condemn'd as an *Error*, what a general darkness and ignorance wou'd then have been in the World, in comparison of that Light which now abounds. The great *Architect* of the World hath been observ'd not to throw down all Gifts and Knowledge to Mankind confusedly at once, but in

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a Regular Parſimonious Method, to diſperſe them by certain Degrees, Periods, and progreſs of Time leaving Man to make induſtrious Reſearches and Inveſtigations after *Truth*; *he left the World to the Diſputations of Men*, as the *Wiſeſt* of Men ſays, who in the Acquiſition of Natural Truths went from the Hyſope to the Cedar; *one Day certifieth another*, and one Age rectifieth another, and the morrow hath more Experience than the preceeding Day. Thoſe Times which we term vulgarly the *old World*, was indeed the *Youth* of it, and tho' if reſpect be had to the Particular and Perſonal Acts of Generation, and to the Relation of Father and Son, they who liv'd before us, and preceeded us, may be call'd our *Anceſtors*; yet if you go to the Age of the World in general, and to the true length and longævity of Things, *We* are more properly the *Ancients*, and the preſent Age is the greateſt Antiquity: Hence, as the

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Lord *Bacon* observes we have generally a wrong Notion of Antiquity; for (says he) *to speak truly, Antiquitas seculi, juventus Mundi*: That which we commonly call *Antiquity*, is but the *Nonage* of the World: And in this respect, the *Younger* Brother may be term'd more Ancient than his *Elder*, because the World was older when he enter'd into it. The admiring of Former Ages, was a Vanity that possess'd all Times as well as Ours; and the *Golden Age* was never the *Present*. They who went before us, have not prevented us, but have opened a Door, that we may enter into the Recesses of *Truth*: He that comes last hath certainly the best advantage in the Inquiry. Our *Ancestors* have done wisely and well in their Generations, but they have not done all; much Work still remains behind, and he that lives a thousand ages hence, shall not have reason to complain, That there are no hidden *Truths* fit for him to Enquire after.

ter. There are more Worlds to conquer; every day brings a new Light, and by a wiſe and careful Labour, we may improve what our Fore-Fathers ſpy'd, when they peept thro' the Creviſes. If the latter Ages cou'd be abſtracted from the mixture of *Intereſt*, and the Engagement of their Party, they are in many things better able to teach the People than the *Ancients*. There is certainly a truer, and more certain knowledge of Things, now than formely: But that which ſpoils all, is, Men are grown a great deal more Cunning, and few there are who take any other Aim, than that of *Intereſt*; ſo that hence it is, That many times it proves ſafer to rely on the Authority of Former Ages, tho' more ignorant than of Latter Ages, which tho' more knowing, yet more dangerous to follow, in reſpect of that Deſign and Artifice, which now a days Men uſe, on purpoſe to promote their own private Intereſt. In ſhort, it behoves every one in the

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search of *Truth*, always to preserve a Philosophical Liberty: Not to be so enslav'd to the Opinion of any Man, as to think whatever he says, to be Infallible. We must labour to find out what Things are in Themselves by our own Experience, and a thorow Examination of their Natures, not what another says of them. *Non tam Authoritas in Disputando, quàm rationis Momenta quærenda sunt*, said *Cicero*; a Man ought not so much to regard the Person who speaks, as the Thing that is spoken, but it is the unhappy Humour of too many Men, *jurare in Verba Magistri*, servilely to tye themselves to the Authority of particular Men, and to see with other Mens Spectacles: The greatest part of the World being rather led with the Names of their Masters, and with the reverend Respect they bear their Persons or Memories, than with the Soundness and Truth of the Things they teach. Men first take up a Confidence of the Learning or Sanctity of

of a Perſon, and then all his Notions are receiv'd implicitely, and are ſtrictly embraced, without the leaſt Examination: And this admiration of Mens Perſons, has in all ages been of huge miſchief, and very pernicious; it has nurs'd up private Fancies into ſolemn publick Errors, and given an unhappy Perpetuity to many Heterodox Opinions, which wou'd elſe have expir'd with their firſt Defenders. Men do not any where more eaſily err, than where they follow a Guide, whom they preſume they may ſafely truſt. Belief, without Evidence of Reaſon, muſt be only there abſolute, where the Authority is unqueſtionable; And where it is impoſſible to err, there only it is impious to diſtruſt. As for Mens Aſſertions, *Quibus poſſibile eſt ſubeſſe falſum*; what one ſaid of Friendſhip, *Sic ama tanquam Oſurus*, love with that Wiſdom, as to remember you may be provoked to the Contrary, is more warrantable and advantagious

in Knowledge *Sic crede tanquam Dissensurus*, so to *Believe*, as to be ready, when cause requires to *dissent*. It is a too much Straitning of a Man's own understanding, to enthral it unto any; and besides, there is not any thing, which hath bred more Distempers in the Body of Learning, than Factions and Sidings; when as *Seneca* said of *Cato*, that he would rather esteem Drunkenness a Vertue, than *Cato* Vicious. To conclude, There is no one thing hath more stunted the Growth of Learning, than a stiff adhering to the Dictates of the *Ancients*; For he who makes *Plato* or *Aristotle* the standard of Humane Knowledge, cannot possibly transcend the Learning of *Plato*, or *Aristotle*; the utmost he can do, he may come up to that height, but (like *Water*,) he can never rise heigher than the *Source*. I know many are of Opinion, that vast advantages have accrued to modern Knowledge,

Knowledge, from the help and aſſiſtance, which the *Ancients* have tranſmitted to us; but for my part, I never did, or cou'd believe any ſuch thing: Nay, for ought I know, in this reſpect, we have rather loſt than gain'd by the *Ancients*; for by our Acting thus implicitely and reſigning our ſelves to their Authorities, we have not been ſo careful as we ought to have been, in preſerving our Reaſon in its juſt and due Liberties: And to walk always upon Crutches, is we know the ſure way to loſe the uſe of our Limbs. Such an abſolute Submiſſion (then) to the *Ancients*, does wonderfully cramp the parts, and fetters the underſtandings of Men; for ſo long as they have this narrowneſs of thought, and are thus ſtreight laced, they think it a ſort of Sacrilege to tranſcend their *Anceſtors*. Thus then for fear of out ſhooting our Fore Fathers Mark, we do but Copy one after another, and ſo the Dance goes round; nor are

we one jot the Wiser, for growing Older. Those who rely wholly upon the help of others, and never use any Industry of their own, must be contented to live in a constant Poverty. And therefore while we Superstitiously follow the Dictates of the *Ancients*, 'tis but reasonable to believe, we break the Force, and stunt the Growth of our own Genius, and by constraining and grafting our own Notions upon the Opinions of others, we may very well be thought to have gain'd a less stock of *Learning* and Knowledge, than otherwise we might have been Masters of, if we had but suffered our own Thoughts and Fancies to have ranged more freely, and with less Restraint, Thus he who spends all his time in *Translating*, or Painting of *Copies*, will never do well in making an *Original*, unless it be in the worst Sence. Besides, if a Man has good Natural Parts of his own, why may we not believe, that too much

much *Learning* may as well Suffocate and Stifle ſuch a Man's *Invention*, as we ſee too much *Wood* heaped on the Fire, or too cloſe together, does often quite extinguiſh and put it out. In a word, the *Mind* as well as the *Body* receives more Strength and Vigour from the warmth of *Exerciſe* than of *Cloths*: Nay, too much of this *Foreign Heat* ſays Sir *William Temple*, does rather make Men faint, and their Conſtitutions more tender and weaker, than otherwiſe they wou'd be; which is agreeable to that *Aphoriſm* of *Hippocrates*, That *all Adventitious Heat deſtroys the Natural.*

Indeed, it is wonderful to obſerve, how well pleas'd ſome Men are, in propping themſelves up by the Learning and Knowledge of other Men; which appears by their many and frequent *Quotations* out of *Authors*, and that upon every ſlight occaſion. No doubt the Man valued himſelf much, and thought

the saying to be Learning, and an Elegancy too, that *Men have Beards*, and that *Women have none*; when he had quoted *Beza*, for it: Nor ought he to be esteem'd less considerable for Clarkship, that cou'd tell us, *Pax res bona est*, Saith St. *Austin*. But as silly and ridiculous as this Humour seems to be, I find it was once very Common among such as affected the Reputation of *Learning*; nor indeed, is it yet quite out of use among *Pedants*, and the Vulgar sort of *Scholars*; tho' all the Wiser have outgrown and do despise it; nor is it to be doubted, but the rest will do so too, when once they consider, how mean and inglorious it is, to have our Heads and Books laden, just as Cardinal *Campius's* Mules were with old and useless Luggage. For my part, I love to hear a Man speak his own Sense; I affect not an Author who runs altogether upon *Quotations*, without something of his own too. 'Tis no great Satis-

faction

faction to me, to hear only that which I may read at any time. And he who recites another Mans Words, is no more to me than a *Notary*. And therefore let these sort of Men value themselves as much as they please: This way of theirs, to content themselves with other Mens Knowledge and Opinions, is certainly the Idlest and most Superficial sort of Learning. For can any thing be easier, than to say, *Cicero* says thus, or these are the Words of *Plato*, or *Aristotle*? A Mag Pie, or a Parrot wou'd say as much as that. I remember I have read of a Rich Man at *Rome*, who at a great expence had got into his Family some of the Ablest Men, and such as were the most exquisitely skill'd in all sorts of Science, whose employment it was, always to be at his Elbow, that in case it should ever happen, there might be any dispute among his Friends upon any Subject whatsoever, that they might Sup-

ply his Place, and be ready to prompt him, one with a Sentence out of *Seneca*, another with a verse of *Homer*, and the like, every one according to his *Talent*; And all this while the Block-headed *Patron* fancied his knowledge to be his own, because they being Maintained at his Charge, he thought himself justly entitled to all the Learning they possest. This is just like some of the highest Quality, who would fain have their Learning be esteem'd in proportion to those noble Libraries their Ancestors have left them; tho' at the same time (God knows) they make no more use of the Books, than the old Woman who sweeps the Library.

But to proceed; If we enquire the reason why the *Mathematicks*, and *Mechanick Arts*, have so much got the start in growth, of other Sciences: This may very well be thought, to be one considerable cause of it, that their Progress hath not been regarded by this Reverential

Awe

Awe of former Diſcoveries: Herein Men have acted freely without laying any reſtraint upon themſelves, or *Embargo* upon their Intellectuals: No Man ever thought it an Hereſie to out-limn *Apelles*, or to out-work the *Obelisks*: It was never imputed to *Galileus* as a Crime, that he ſaw further than the *Ancients*, and that he choſe rather to believe *his own* eyes, than either *Ariſtotle* or *Ptolomy*. Thoſe famous *Optick Glaſſes*, which are now ſo Serviceable to us, are not a jot the leſs valued, becauſe they were not us'd by the *Ancients*; nor do we give the leſs credit to their Informations, becauſe they were *hid from Ages*. The *Polar* vertue of the *Loadſtone*, was unknown to the *Ancients*, this was reſerv'd for latter days; and yet no Man is ſo ſilly, to think the vaſt advantages, which accrue to Mankind by that Noble Invention, are (therefore) the leſs to be eſteem'd. And had the Author of that Invention (one *Flavius Goia*, a *Neapolitane*, who liv'd about three hundred

hundred Years ago) been of this narrow Principle, that *we are not to tranſcend the Bounds of the Antients*; we muſt then (for want of this Diſcovery) have committed our ſelves to the Sole conduct of the *Stars*; and as the *Ancients* did, muſt *We* always have been creeping near the Shoar: Then the fourth part of the Earth had been yet unknown, and *Hercules*'s *Pillars* had ſtill been the World's *Ne Ultra*: *Seneca*'s Prophecy had been an *unfulfill'd* Prediction, and one Moiety of our Globes an Empty Hemiſphere.

ESSAY V.

ESSAY V.

Whether the MEN *of this preſent* AGE, *are any way* Inferiour *to thoſe of former* Ages; *either in reſpect of* Virtue, Learning, *or long* Life.

THAT the World doth daily decline, is an Opinion ſo *Univerſally* believ'd, that whoever goes about to defend the Contrary, preſently ſhall be thought to maintain a Paradox. But that thing call'd *Univerſality*, is ſo ſlight an Evidence of Truth, That even Truth it ſelf is aſham'd of it: For what is *Univerſality* but a quainter Word to ſignifie the *Multitude*: Now humane Authority at the ſtrongeſt is but weak, but the *Multitude* is the weakeſt part

part of humane *Authority*; for it is the great Patron of Error, the moſt eaſily abus'd, and the moſt hardly diſabuſed. The beginning of Error may be, and generally is, from Private Perſons, but the maintainer and continuer of Error is the *Multitude*. To infer the truth of a Religion, from the Number of its Profeſſors, is falſely to conclude the fineneſs of the Cloth from the largeneſs of the Meaſure. How vain and ridiculous then is it in the *Papiſts*, who think this Argument of *Univerſality*, ſo invincible a Proof of the truth of their Religion. If *Multitude* be an Argument that Men are in the right, in vain then hath the Scripture ſaid, *Thou ſhalt not follow a Multitude to do Evil*: For if this Argument ſignifie any thing, the greater Number can never be in the wrong. Indeed could wiſhing do any good, I could wiſh well to this kind of Proof; *Sed nunquam ita bene erit rebus humanis, ut plures ſint meliores*, It will never go ſo well with Man-

Mankind, that the *Moſt* ſhall be the *Beſt*. In ſhort, the beſt that can be ſaid of Argument and Reaſon drawn from *Univerſality* and *Multitude*, is this, ſuch Reaſon may perhaps ſerve well to excuſe an *Error*, but it can never ſerve to warrant a *Truth*. Notwithſtanding therefore, that the opinion of the World's conſtant Declining is ſo firmly radicated in the minds of moſt Men, yet this is no ſufficient reaſon, why we ſhould acquieſce in ſuch a belief: Nor can any thing be more Unphiloſophical, than an Implicite Faith in this matter. And therefore we ſhall now preſume to enter upon the Subject. There are two extreams common amongſt Men: the one proper to young Men, who always value themſelves above their Predeceſſors, and like *Rehoboam*, think their own little finger ſtronger than the whole Body of their Fathers; the other Peculiar to old Men, who always extol the time paſt above the preſent. *To*

ſpeak

speak impartially, old Men, says *Dr.* Brown, *from whom we should expect the greatest Example of Wisdom, do most exceed in this point of folly; Commending the days of their Youth, which they scarce remember, at least well understood not; extolling those times, which in their younger Years they heard their Fathers condemn, and condemning those times, which the Gray Heads of their Posterity shall commend.* And that Old Men always were of this temper, we may understand from *Horace*, who makes the same Complaint of them. Now, the reason why Old Men are so much out of humour with the present times, I take to be this; They being for the most part much altered from what they were in their Youth, as to their Temper and Complexion, and being full of sad Melancholly thoughts, this makes them think the World is chang'd, whereas in truth the Change is in themselves. It fares with them in this Case, as with those whose Mouth is out of

taſt, or whoſe Eyes are bloodſhot, or are troubled with the Jaundiſe, the one imagining all things bitter or ſour, which they taſt, and the other red or yellow which they ſee.

Terræq; Urbeſque recedunt.
Virg. Æn. 3.

Themſelves being launch'd out into the Deep, the Trees and Houſes ſeem to go backward, whereas really the Motion is in themſelves, the Houſes and Trees ſtill ſtanding where they were. *Seneca* tells us a pleaſant Story of *Harpaſte* his Wife's Fool, who being all of a ſudden ſtruck blind, would by no means be perſwaded of her own blindneſs, but ſtill cry'd out how dark the Room is grown. Such for the moſt part is the Caſe of Old Men, who, by reaſon of the Infirmities of their Bodies and Minds, no longer finding the ſame guſt and pleaſure in the delights of the World, that they found in their Youth, lay the

the fault upon the World, instead of imputing the same to themselves, as they ought to do. For God creates not Souls now with less advantages then formerly; He is as liberal of his Favours to us of this Generation, as ever he was to any before us; And Nature being still as Wise and Powerful as heretofore, and the Universal Causes the same, their Operations must be likewise as perfect, and their Effects as excellent in these days, as they have been in any. Let not Men therefore deceive themselves, and think that we live in the Dregs of Time, and what mighty advantages the *Ancients* (as they call them) had over us; for if *Antiquity* be to have the preference, the advantage will then be of our side; For *Antiquity* consists in the old Age of the World, not in the youth of it. 'Tis *we* are the Fathers, and of more Authority than former Ages; because *we* have the Advantage of more time then they had, and Truth (we say) is

is the Daughter of Time. And besides, our Minds are so far from being impair'd, that they improve more and more in acuteness; and being of the same Nature with those of the Ancients, have such an advantage beyond them, as a Pigmy hath upon the shoulders of a Gyant; from whence he beholds not only as much, but more than his Supporter doth. But since the Question now to be handled, is rather of *Fact* than of *Right*, the best way of discussing it, will be by comparing the past Ages with the present, and that in these three Respects, of *Vertue*, *Learning*, and *long Life*:

1. First then, if we survey the Vices of former Times, they will certainly appear more Barbarous and Epidemical, than such as now Reign in the World. Even to this day, do we not esteem it an unparallell'd piece of wickedness, That no stranger could enter *Sodom*, without being defiled by the Lust of the more than bruitish Citizens? A Crime

so foul, that nothing but Fire and Brimstone could purge the stench of it from the World. After this, among the *Ægyptians* was that of the *Strawless Tax*. The *Græcians* under their wisest Lawgivers approv'd of Theft, if it were committed with Art and Cunning. And Drunkenness was so usual a Vice among them, that from thence *Pergræcari*, signifies *to be mad with Drink*. The *Romans* had two Rules of Drinking, which they commonly observ'd; the one was, to Drink down the Evening Star, and Drink up the Morning Star, *ad Diurnam stellam matutinam potantes*, saith *Plautus*; the other commonly practised among them, was the Drinking so many Healths, as there were Letters in their Mistresses Name, according to that of *Martial*:

Navia sex Cyathis, septem Justina bibatur,
Quinque Lycas Lyde quatuor, Ida tribus.

Nor

Nor were their very Women free from this exceſs: Nay, *Seneca* aſſures us, that even in Drinking, they ſometimes out-did the Men. But to proceed. Have we any ſo vain as *Xerxes*, that would think to whip the Sea into Calmneſs? Or ſo Prodigal as was *Alexander*, who, according to *Plutarch*, ſpent twelve Millions of Talents upon *Hephæſtion's* Funeral? Such a prodigious Sum, that many queſtion whether at that time the Revenue of the whole World would amount to it. Or, what Prince is there in theſe days ſo profuſely extravagant, as *Heliogabalus*, the Emperour, who was poſſeſs'd rather with a Madneſs, than exceſs of Prodigality; he fill'd his Fiſh-Ponds with Roſe-Water; he ſupplied his Lamps with the precious Balſam, that diſtils from the Trees in *Arabia*; he wore upon his Shoos Pearls and Precious Stones engraven by the hands of the moſt skilful Artiſts; his Dining-Room was ſtrew'd with Saffron, and his

Portico's with the dust of Gold: And he was never known to put on any Garment a second time, whether it was of the richest Silk, or woven with Gold. Then as for the *Cruelty* of former Ages, we shall find it many degrees to transcend any thing that is done in these days; even amongst the *Jews*, who by their Religion pretended to more precisenes, what more common amonst them, than Incest, Fratricide, Parricide, Sawing Men to Death, and the most Barbarous sorts of Cruelties, oftentimes commited only for the diversion, and entertainment of Princes? What Action did ever carry in it so much of Inhumanity, as that of the thirty *Athenian Tyrants*, who caused the Daughters of some of the Slain Citizens to dance, in the Blood of their own Parents, who had newly been Murder'd by them? *Lucius Florus* tells us, that the *German* Women, in their Wars with the *Romans*, would very commonly take their Naked Sprawling Infants,

Infants, and throw them in the face of thoſe they fought with; thinking that ſo Inhuman a Spectacle might daunt the *Roman* Courage. Was there ever ſince then, any thing like the *Ten Perſecutions*? What but *Nero's Luxury*, could ever compare with *Nero's Cruelty*? And yet *Domitian*, in one particular, out-went him; for he took delight in ſeeing thoſe Torments executed, which *Nero* but commanded. What ſhall I now ſay of *Servius Galba*, who, when he was in *Spain*, having aſſembled together the Inhabitants of three Cities, to conſult (as he pretended) about their common ſafety, at one ſtroke cut off ſeven thouſand of them, among whom were the very Flower of their Youth? I might alſo tell you of *Licinius Lucullus*, who, contrary to expreſs Articles, put to the Sword twenty thouſand of the *Caucæi*, after they had ſurrender'd: And of *Octavianus Auguſtus*, who, after the taking of *Peruſia*, at one Sacrifice offer'd up the lives of three

hundred of the Principal Citizens at the Altar of his Uncle *Julius*: And of *Antoninus Caracalla*, who being incenſed againſt the Citizens of *Alexandria* upon the account of ſome jeſts they had made of him, entred into the City in a peaceable manner, and ſummoning before him all the Youth, he ſurrounded them with his Souldiers, who, upon the Signal given, fell immediately upon them, and ſlew every Mothers Son of them; and afterwards uſing the like Cruelty upon the reſt of the Inhabitants, he utterly deſtroy'd that moſt Spacious, and Populous City of *Alexandria*. Thus could I eaſily give many more inſtances, to ſhew the wickedneſs of former Ages, not only in reſpect of their Barbarous *Cruelties*, but of their other Vices; but I forbear this, ſince I very well know, that the Character of thoſe Times cannot be better deſcribed, than is already by the *Apoſtles*, in their ſeveral *Epiſtles*: For what a Monſtrous Catalogue of Sins do

we

we meet with in the first Chapter to the *Romans*; Sins of so deep a dye, and of so horrid a nature, and such an Inventory of all sorts of wickedness that one might very well imagine the Apostle had been rather describing some *Vision of Hell*, than the *Seat of the* Roman *Empire*. To conclude then this Point, let us not imagine that ever any Age was, or will be, free from Vice and Enormities; while Humane Nature continues, there will be Frailties: *Vitia erunt donec Homines erunt*, saith *Tacitus*, Vice hath always had a being in the World, and will continue as long as Men are upon Earth. How unreasonable is it, to think that *Man* can be better out of *Paradise*, than he was in it? *Nemo sine Crimine*, The best of Men have their Imperfections. We are no Angels upon Earth, but are always transported with some Infirmity or other; and 'twill be so while these frail, fluxible humours reign within us. This as I conceive is that *Black Bean*,

which the *Turkish Alchoran* speaks of, when they feign, That *Mahomet* being asleep among the Mountains of the Moon, two Angels descended, and ripping open his Breast, they took his Heart, and wash'd it in Snow, and afterwards pull'd out a *Black Bean*, which was the portion of the Devil, and so replaced the Heart. All things here below run in a kind of Circle; And as in Arts and Sciences, so likewise in the Manners of Men there is a Vicissitude and Revolution. Virtue and Vice have no setled Habitation; every Climate hath had its turn: Sometimes one Country carries it for Vertue and Learning, and sometimes another. *Athens*, which was formerly the only place for Learning and Civility, is now quite over-run with Barbarism and Ignorance. Every Nation hath its *Acme*, or highest pitch of Elevation; And when once the spoke of the Wheel is uppermost, it soon whurries to the bottom. As a Kingdom rises in Empire,

pire, ſo it enlarges both in Vertue and Vice; and when it declines, ſo the Declenſion of theſe is proportionable. And though as to particular Kingdoms, one time may be either better or worſe than another; yet take the World in Groſs, and lump it together, we ſhall find that Humane Nature is much at the ſame Standard, as it was formerly; And as we commonly obſerve of the Sea, That as it gets in one place, it loſes in another; ſo every Age may make the ſame Obſervation of the Vertues and Vices of Mankind.

2. The next thing to be conſider'd, is, whether *former* Ages excell'd the *Preſent* in reſpect of Learning. Of all the Ancients there were none more eſteem'd for Learning than the *Ægyptians*: The old *Ægyptian* Learning was ſo Famous, that the Spirit of God, ſets forth the Eminency of *Moſes*'s Knowledge by his skill in it, and the Matchleſſneſs of *Solmon*'s Wiſdom by its exceeding it; And therefore we may very well conclude, that the *Ægyptian*

tian Learning in those days, was conversant about more generous and more useful Notices, than afterwards; such as *Geometry*, *Astronomy*, *Policy*, *Physick*, and other such like Arts, which either were perfective of their Rational Faculties, or did Minister to the Uses and Necessities of Nature: As is generally reported by all Ancient Historians. But had the Primitive Learning of *Ægypt* been the same it was in latter Ages, it had been as great a disparagement to *Moses*, as 'tis now justly reputed a Commendation, That he was accomplished in all the *Ægyptian* Learning, and had amounted only to this, That he was a vain trifling, Superstitious Fellow. And what the *Ægyptian* Priest objected to the *Greeks*, *That they were always Children*, might be more truly applied to themselves, if it be the property of Children to value trifles. What Childish Fooleries their *Hieroglyphicks* were, Learned Men now prove from the lost labour, and fruitless

fruitless Industry of *Kircher's Oedipus Ægyptiacus*. Certainly, if they had design'd to abuse and debauch this humour, they could scarce have contriv'd more fond and extravagant Emblems; and indeed their Coarseness, and Unlikeness to the things they should resemble, sufficiently discover them to have been but the rude Essays of a Barbarous and Undisciplin'd *Fancy*. *These Hieroglyphicks*, says the Learned Bishop *Wilkins, seem to be but a slight, imperfect Invention, suitable to those first and ruder Ages; much of the same Nature with that* Mexican *way of Writing by Picture, which was a meer shift they were put to, for want of the Knowledge of Letters. And it seems to me questionable*, says the same Author, *whether the Ægyptians did not at first use their* Hieroglyphicks *upon the same account, namely, for want of Letters.* The Lord *Herbert* of *Cherbury*, speaking of these *Hieroglyphicks*, says, they were first invented by *Priests*, rather to hide

hide their Opinions, or perchance their Ignorance, than to instruct others. But for all this, it is scarce credible what a mighty noise this *Hieroglyphick* way of Philosophizing hath made, though there is so little of substance in it, and how exceedingly it took in the Infancy of the World; as it is the property of Children, to be taken more with sensible Forms, Shadows, or Pictures, which please the Fancy, than with solid Reason. Indeed, to a Man that considers it, nothing could ever seem more preposterous to the design of Learning, than these *Hieroglyphicks*, or Mystical Representations, which were unavoidably clogg'd with two Inconveniencies, very unsuitable to the propagation of *Knowledge*, which were *Obscurity* and *Ambiguity*: For it not only cost them a great deal of Time to gather up such *Symbolical* Things, which might represent their Conceptions; but when they had pitc'd upon them, they were lyable to a great variety of *Interpretations*,

pretations, as is evident in all those remainders of them, preserved by the Industry of some Ancient Writers. I cannot therefore imagin any rational Man could think that Study worth his pains, which at the highest can amount but to a *Conjecture*; and when it is come to that with a great deal of pains, it is nothing but some ordinary and trivial Observation. *Certainly* (saith the Learned *Stillingfleet*) *this kind of Learning deserves the highest form among the* DIFFICILES NUGÆ, *and all these* Hieroglyphicks *put together, will make but one good one, and that should be for* LABOUR LOST. I might here (if it were not too great a Digression) shew how very Pernicious the use of these *Hieroglyphicks* were to the Vulgar, who seeing the *Attributes* of *God* represented under the shapes of *Animals* and *Plants*, took occasion to adore those Corporeal Things, and so became the most Superstitious of all Nations, going so far as to deifie

Garlick

Garlick, *Onions*, *Rats*, and *Toads*. But to proceed: The truth of it is, the *Ægyptians* seem to have had only Knowledge enough, to know that their Neighbours had none at all, and cunning enough to pretend an inspection into strange and abstruse Mysteries; knowing that others by reason of their Ignorance could not controul them, and by reason of their Credulity would be very apt to credit them; and thence they continually abus'd the Credulous *Grecians* with Tales and Fables. The Learned *Stillingfleet* tells us, There wanted not grounds of Suspicion, that the old *Ægyptian* Learning was not of that Elevation, which the present distance of our Age makes us apt to think it was. And the Learned *Conringius*, in his Book *de Hermeticâ Medicinâ*, hath endeavour'd to shew the great defects there were in it. *Nor can it, I think, be denied*, saith Stillingfleet, *but according to the reports we have now concerning the old* Ægyptian *Learning, some parts*

of

of it were frivolous, others obſcure, a great deal Magical, and the reſt ſhort of that Improvement, which the acceſſion of the parts and induſtry of after Ages gave unto it. It were eaſie to ſhew, how much even thoſe parts of Learning, wherein the *Ægyptians* and the other *Ancients* did moſt excel, have been improved in theſe latter Ages; but this Task having been performed by abler Pens, I ſhall only touch upon three Things, ſo very uſeful to Mankind, *viz. Anatomy, Geography,* and *Navigation*; to ſhew what a mighty improvement they have received in this laſt Age. Firſt then, as for *Anatomy*; This Art was doubtleſs in very little uſe among the Ancients. I know indeed, there are ſome who tell us, that the *Ægyptians* were very accurate in the knowledge of *Anatomy*; but when I conſider how exceſſively Curious and Ceremonious, or rather Superſtitious they were in preſerving their Bodies entire and unputrified, I cannot but conceive

conceive their opening them was rather for the *Embowelling*, than the *Anatomizing* of them. As for the *Grecians*, this Art could not well be in practice among them, because their usual Custom was to Burn their dead Bodies, as we find it attested by *Homer*, *Herodotus*, *Thucydides*, and *Plutarch*; and besides, had *Anatomy* been in use among the *Grecians*, there is no dispute but the works of *Hipocrates*, yet extant, would have discovered it, which we do not find in any place they do: Nay, so far from that, that *Hipocrates* himself going one time to visit *Democritus*, he happen'd to find him busie in Dissecting several Beasts, who asking him what he meant by his being so employ'd, *Democritus* (by way of Apology) makes him this reply, *Hæc Animalia quæ vides propterea seco, non Dei opera perosus, sed fellis bilisque naturam disquirens.* Now, if he apprehended that the Dissecting of *Beasts* might be lookt upon as an *hating of Gods works*, he might

might much more have feared that censure, had he cut up the Bodies of *Men*. Nor does it appear by any thing extant in the Writings of *Galen*, that that other *Father of Physicians*, ever made any *Anatomy* of Humane Bodies. Nor was this Art practised among the *Romans*, nor indeed could it be; forasmuch as they held it unlawful, *Aspicere humana exta*, (as *Pliny* in his Preface to his 28 Book tells us) to look upon the Entrals of Mens Bodies, And *Dion* in his *55th* Book says, That it was allowed to *Tiberius* to touch the Body of *Augustus*, *Quod nefas alias erat*, which otherwise had been unlawful. And that the *Primitive Christians* favour'd not the Practice of *Anatomy*, will plainly appear from *Tertullian*, who in the *4th* Chapter of his Book *de Anima*, speaking of one *Herophilus*, doubts whether to call him *Medicum* or *Lanium*, a *Physician* or a *Butcher*, *Qui Hominem odiit, ut nosset*, saith he, who hated Man, that he might know him: And St. *Augustine* in his

22*d* Book *de Civ. Dei. Cap.* 24. runs much upon the same strain. And among others we find Pope *Boniface* the 8*th* such a profess'd Enemy to this art of dissecting Humane Bodies, that he threatens immediately his *Thunderbolt* of *Excommunication* to all such as should do any thing of this nature. Thus we see how very shie and unacquainted the *Ancients* were with this most excellent Art, which certainly is one of the most useful in humane Life, as tending most to the Eviscerating, and disclosing the secrets of Nature. But now in these latter Ages, we have taken off this thick Veil of Superstition, and there is scarce any Man, who has not a desire to know, *How curiously and wonderfully he is made.* Hence then *Anatomy* hath of late been a *free* and *general Practice*; and particularly in this Age it hath receiv'd wonderful Improvements. For proof whereof I need not take much pains, since there is no Man that hath the least insight into Physick,

but

but knows how much the Learned Dr. *Harvey* in that excellent Treatise of his, *De Generatione Animalium*, hath transcended all that went before him, in that full and satisfactory account he there presents the World with, concerning the Constitution, Structure, and Nutrition of Humane Bodies: What a mighty name hath he justly got in the *Orbis Literarius*, by that wonderful and surprizing discovery of the *Circulation of the Blood*; a Doctrine so Universally embraced, and so unquestionably true, that a Physician would be thought a Heretick *primæ Classis*, who should in the least dispute it? How much is the whole Colledge of Physicians indebted to the memory of the Famous Dr. *Glisson*, for giving them a more true and perfect account of the Nature of Sanguification, Bilification, Separation of Urine, and other Humours from the Mass of Blood, than ever the World was formerly acquainted with? And does not the Incompara-

ble Dr. *Willis* deserve to be reckon'd among the Benefactors of Mankind, for those great Discoveries he hath made of Nutrition, Generation, and Separation of the *Succus Nervosus*, and Animal Spirits, with their præternatural affections? How glimmering a light, and how imperfect a notion had the Ancients of the nature of the *Saliva*, and other Juices that are convey'd into the Mouth, together with their Passages; until our Learned and Famous Country-Man, Dr. *Wharton*, and of late the Learned *Steno* so happily disclos'd those Secrets of Nature? Did any of the Ancients ever imagine, that the Lungs consisted only of Vessels and Bladders? That the Liver, Spleen, and Reins were *Conglomerate Glandules*; and yet that these are so, that expert Anatomist, and great Naturalist, *Malphighius*, hath informed the World? Which of the Ancients ever dreamt, That the Testicles of the Male should be nothing but a *Conglomeration of Vessels*;

Veſſels; and the Female Teſticles, *Ovaries*; was not this Diſcovery alſo an honour reſerv'd for the preſent Age, and to the Induſtrious and Learned *De Graef* are the thanks due? Who among the *Ancients* ever rightly inform'd us as to the Operation of *Cathartick* Medicines in Humane Bodies: Or as to the Reaſon of the different Colours of the *Excrements*, that are obſerv'd to be evacuated by them, until that great *Anatomical* Light, *Sir George Ent*, imparted it to the World? Which was it of the *Ancients*, that ever had a true notion how the *Chyle* was convey'd into the Maſs of Blood? We very well know, they told us it diſcharg'd it ſelf through the *Meſeraick* Veins into the Liver; but as to its true Paſſage into the Blood, they were as little able to give an account of that, as they were to demonſtrate the Commixture of the Air therewith; and yet they had the confidence to teach it in their Schools as an *Ens Rationis*, though

they had never made any Proof, or Experiment for the truth of this Assertion. In what a high Measure then did that great Anatomist Dr. *Lower*, oblige the World, by his great Industry and indefatigable Pains, who in that rare and admirable Tract of his, *De Corde*, hath not only more punctually shew'd the true passage of the *Chyle* through its Lacteals, Receptacle, and Chyliferous ducts, than formerly, but hath plainly demonstrated that it is impossible there can be any other, by which it should have its discharge into the Mass of Blood? Nor are his Arguments less nervous and cogent, for proving the Commixture of the nitrous Particles of the Air with the Mass of Blood. Thus have I given you an account of several of the most considerable Improvements made in this present Age, in that part of Physick relating to *Anatomy*; all which ingenious and excellent Inventions, are of great use, as affording us better Hypotheses in Physick, and by Consequence

ſequence tending to a better and more effectual way of Curing Diſeaſes.

The next thing that falls under our Conſideration, is, to ſhew how much *Geography* hath lately been Improv'd. The *Ancients* were ſo very defective in this Art or Science, that the Learned *Varenius* tells us, That the moſt General and Neceſſary Things belonging thereunto, were then unknown; as the Flux and Reflux of the Sea; the Habitableneſs of the Torrid Zone; the Polar Property of the *Magnet*; the diverſity of Winds, the true dimenſion of the Earth: Nor had they any true Deſcriptions of remote Countries, concerning which both the *Greeks* and *Romans* had very fabulous Relations; they knew not that the Earth was encompaſſed by the Sea, and might be ſailed round; They were totally ignorant of *America*, and both the *North* and *South* parts of this Hemiſphere; yea, and underſtood very little of the

remoter parts of their own *Asia*; That part of the *Indies* that lies on the other side of the River *Ganges*, was in a manner a *Terra Incognita* to them; they knew little or nothing of the vast Kingdom of *China*, nothing of *Japan*, or the numerous Oriental Islands, and these made a great, if not the best part of *Asia*. But that which to me seem'd stranger, or more remarkable, is, That neither *Thucydides* nor *Herodotus*, nor any other *Greek* Author Cotemporary with them, have so much as mention'd the *Romans*, though then growing up to a dreadful Power, and being both *Europeans*. *Budæus* in his 4th Book *De Asse*, tells us, That the *Grecians* were so utterly ignorant of the *Spaniards*, that *Ephorus*, one of their most accurate *Geographers*, took *Spain*, which he calls *Iberia*, to be a City. It was in former times counted so dangerous a thing to believe the *Antipodes*, that *Boniface*, Arch-bishop of *Mentz*, by chance seeing a Treatise written

written by *Virgilius*, Bishop of *Saltzburg*, touching the *Antipodes*, thinking that some Damnable pernicious Doctrine might be couched under that strange Name, complain'd first to the Duke of *Bohemia*, and afterwards to Pope *Zachary*, *Anno* 745. By whom the poor Bishop (whose great misfortune was to be Learned in such a blockish Age) was condemn'd as a *Heretick*. Nay, even St. *Austin*, *Lactantius*, and some other of the Ancient Writers, do by no means allow of the *Antipodes*, but look upon it to be a ridiculous, incredible story; and Venerable *Bede* is much of the same Opinion. The Learned *Fracastorius* saith, That our Ancestors knew little *Westward* beyond the *Fortunate Islands*, and *Eastward* as little beyond *Catygara*, now call'd *Canton*, the Richest City in *China*; So that (as that Learned Author informs us) of the whole Habitable World, scarce one half was known to the *Ancients*. Now, by the account I have here given, it plainly

plainly appears, how grosly ignorant the *Ancients* were in the knowledge of *Geography*, as also what a vast Improvement it hath received in these latter Days: For our Navigation is far greater, our Commerce is more general, our Charts more exact, our Globes more accurate, our Travels more remote, our Reports more intelligent and sincere, and consequently, our *Geography* far more perfect, than it was in the Elder Times of *Polybius* and *Possidonius*; yea, than in those of *Ptolomy*, *Strabo*, and *Pomponius Mela*, who liv'd among the *Cæsars*. And if this Art was so very defective in the flourishing times of the *Roman* Empire, there is no dispute but it was much more so, in the days of *Aristotle* and the *Græcians*: And therefore no wonder the *Macedonian Youth* was no better instructed, than to believe he had Conquer'd the whole World; When (God knows) there were Nations enough, both before him and behind him, to have

swallow'd

ſwallow'd up the *Young Commander*, and his *Triumphant Armies*, at a Morſel. But as great an Improvement as hath in theſe latter Ages been made in the knowledge of *Geography*, we have yet reaſon to believe, That our Diſcoveries may ſtill be inlarged to further Countries, a good proof whereof it is, That ſo many ſpacious Shores, and Mountains, and Promontories appear to our *Southern* and *Northern* Sailors; of which we have yet no account, but only ſuch as could be taken by a remote Proſpect at Sea: From whence, and from the Figure of the Earth, it may be concluded, That almoſt as much ſpace of Ground, remains in the Dark, as was fully known in the Times of the *Aſſyrian* or *Perſian* Monarchy. So that without aſſuming any vain *Prophetick* Spirit we may foretel, That the Diſcovery of another *New World* is ſtill behind. To accompliſh this, there is only wanting the Invention of *Longitude*. This if it ſhall be

once

once accomplish'd, will make well nigh as much alteration in the World, as the Invention of the *Needle* did before. And then our *Posterity* may out-go us, as much as we can travel further than the *Ancients*; whose *Demi-Gods*, and *Heroes* did esteem it one of their chief Exploits, to make a journey as far as the *Pillars* of *Hercules*. Whosoever shall think this a desperate Business, can only use the same Arguments, wherewith *Columbus* was at first made ridiculous: If he had been discourag'd by the Raillery of his Adversaries, by the judgment of most *Astronomers* of his Time, and even by the Intreaties of his own Companions, but three days before he had a Sight of Land, we had lost the knowledge of half the World at once.

I am now come to the last *Parallel*, and that is, to shew what vast Improvements the Art of Navigation hath received in these last Ages. *Cardan*, a great Searcher into the Curiosities of Nature, tells us,

That

That among other late Noble Inventions, that of the *Mariners Compaß* is the moſt worthy of Admiration, as being of the greateſt Uſe and Convenience to Mankind. By the help hereof, we are now able to find out a way through the *vaſt Ocean*, in the greateſt Storms and darkeſt Nights, where is neither Path to follow, nor Inhabitant or Paſſenger to enquire; It points out the way to the skillful Mariner, when all other helps fail him, and that with greater certainty than the wit of Man can poſſibly do. By means hereof, are the Commodities of all Countries diſcover'd, Trade, Traffick, and Humane Society maintain'd, their ſeveral Forms of Government and Religion obſerv'd, and the whole World made as it were one *Common-Wealth*, and the moſt diſtant Nations, *Fellow Citizens* of the ſame *Body Politick*. But the beſt way to make us rightly value the bleſſing of this Invention, is, by conſidering the many Shifts and Inconveniences

conveniences the Ancients were put to, for want of it. We may easily Imagine, how Inconvenient the Ancients found it to sail by the guidance of the Stars: For in dark Cloudy weather, when their *Pleiades*, *Helice*, and *Cynosura* were not to be seen, the *Pilot* was always at a loss for his Guide, and knew not how to steer his Ship, but lay expos'd to the casual conduct both of Winds and Tides. And for this reason, the Ancients seldom or never durst venture into the main Ocean, but were fain to go creeping along by the Shoar side: And no more than this (as we have reason to believe) did the *Phœnicans* and *Carthaginians*, the *Tyrians* and *Sydonians*; who though renowned in History for great *Navigators*, yet by the most Learned are thought to have perform'd their Voyages only by *Coasting*, and not by *Crossing* the Ocean. Hence therefore it was, That the Commerce and Communications of those days were very inconsiderable; Their famed

famed Travels in Compariſon were nothing: And that renowned ten years Voyage of *Ulyſſes* (ſo highly celebrated by the Poets of Old) was much ſhort of what many of our Merchants do now every Year perform. Thus you ſee how very defective the Ancients were in this Art of Navigation, the Benefits and Advantages whereof are ſo very Conſiderable, That the Wealth and Strength of a Nation are really to be computed in Proportion to their flouriſhing herein. It was long ſince a wiſe and true Obſervation of *Cicero*, *Qui Mare tenet, eum neceſſe eſt* RERUM *potiri*, He that commands the Sea, muſt neceſſarily enjoy all things. There is not any thing can be a greater Demonſtration of the flouriſhing of a Nation, than when its Genius lies towards *Naval* Affairs, and when by its Induſtry it is arriv'd to a Soveraignty of the *Seas*; This is the true Characteriſtical mark of the greatneſs of Empire: For whoever is Maſter of the Ocean does

does *ipso facto* command the Trade of the World, and whoever hath the Command of that, hath the Absolute disposal of the Riches of the World, and that Money is that which governs Mankind, is a Demonstration as clear as any in *Euclide*. Thus without the least straining of the Argument, we see it naturally follows, that nothing is more vain or ridiculous, than for a Prince, or State, to pretend to an uncontrolable Greatness, that hath not first laid their Foundation in the Deep. And who can be a better instance of this than that Great Emperour *Charles* the *Fifth*, whose carelesness in his *Naval* concerns not only broke his own Design as to the *Universal Monarchy*, but likewise terminated in the ruine of his *Successor*? And this oversight or neglect (though too late) that great Prince was sensible of, when he so strictly gave it in Charge to his Son *Philip*, That if either he would be happy at Home, or Considerable Abroad, he

should

ſhould take care to make himſelf Great at Sea. By his Example then, let no Prince, who aſpires to be great, ſlight or neglect this *Watry Element*; ſince 'tis but a *jeſt* in Politicks, and an *Utopian* Fancy, to think to arrive at the utmoſt height of Empire, without *Fleets* and *Armada's*: And that Prince who thinks to give Law to Mankind, muſt be ſure in the firſt place to make the *Sea* his Friend. This (without a Figure) is to build upon a Rock, whoſe Foundation will ſtand firm and ſure. And therefore that Spirit of Lazineſs, which makes the Spainard ſo much ſlight this Rule, is that, which (in ſpight of the Wealth of the Weſt *Indies*) keeps him ſo poor and beggarly: And while he ſits idle at home, ſwelling with his own Pride, the *Engliſh* and *Dutch* (by their Induſtry) grow Rich by his Spoils, and with his Treaſure of the *Weſt Indies*, do they carry on the Trade of the *Eaſt*. Thus you ſee, the improving of Trade and Com-

merce, is no such slight matter; Nor is it to be wonder'd, that this does so often prove the Ball of Contention; for men may well be allowed to be zealous, when their interest is so nearly concern'd; and this, that wise and Glorious Princess, *Queen Elizabeth*, very well knew, when she so narrowly ey'd and observ'd the *Dutch*, whom she was always jealous of, lest they should grow too great in Navigation, and so by that means might prove our Competitors both by Sea and Land. Since then Commerce and Navigation bring such mighty advantages to a Nation, 'tis no wonder, I say, that the greatest and wisest States, and Governments, have been so very sollicitous for the improving it. *Trade* is the very Life and Soul of the *Universe*, which, like the *Vital* Blood in the Body, Circulates to the Health, and well-being of the whole, and when by the failure of Industry, there is a stop put to *Commerce*, it often proves as fatal to the *Body Politick*,

litick, as the ſtagnating of the Blood does to the *Natural Body*. What were the World but a rude and dull *Indigeſted Lump*, a noiſome and peſtilential Maſs, did not *Commerce*, like the *Sun*, by its *Univerſal* Rays, exhale all its malignant and noxious Vapours, and by a continual Motion and Tranſaction, render it wholeſome and profitable? What would become of the *Buſie Soul* of Man, had ſhe not found out variety of Imployment for its Exerciſe? And therefore *Nature* wiſely did foreſee the many and great Inconveniencies of *Idleneſs*, how that it would Convert the World into another *Chaos*, making the *Earth* but as one dull and uſeleſs *Maſs*, when ſhe hid her Rarities and Treaſures in the ſecret Bowels thereof, and buried them in the *Watry Deep*, and lodg'd them at ſo vaſt and remote a diſtance, that ſo their *Worth* and *Value* might be a *Spur* to *Labour* and *Induſtry* to fetch them thence. Nay, God himſelf is particularly call'd *the God of the Iſles*,

as looking on them, by Virtue of their skill in *Navigation*, to be the beſt *Factors* for the *Common Good*; and as a Bleſſing upon their Induſtry, we find moſt *Iſles* and Maritime places exceed all In-land Cities and Countries in Riches, and Variety of Plenty. We ſee then, 'tis not the vaſtneſs of Territory, but the Convenience of Situation; nor the Multitude of Men, but their Addreſs and Induſtry, which improve a Nation. Now, ſince we have hitherto diſcours'd of Trade in general, and the ſeveral Advantages that accrue from thence; poſſibly the Reader may not think it altogether impertinent, if we entertain him with an Account of the Original of *Trade*, and ſhew how, and by what ſteps and Methods *Commerce* hath advanced it ſelf amongſt Mankind. The firſt of all Humane Race, when they were diſpers'd into ſeveral Lands, were at firſt ſuſtain'd by the *Fruits* of the *Earth*, which fell to their ſhare. Theſe at firſt they cheriſhed,

riſhed, and us'd, not by any *Rules* of *Art*, but by that *Natural Sagacity*, which teaches all Men to endeavour their own Preſervation. And that they might peaceably enjoy theſe, they thought the beſt Courſe they could take, was to Aſſociate themſelves into Families, and to enter into little Leagues, and thus begun *Civil Government*. But finding that no Place was ſo fruitful as to produce all Things neceſſary for Humane Life; this put them upon a Neceſſity, either of taking by force what their Neighbours poſſeſsed, or elſe of Exchanging the ſeveral Productions of their reſpective Soils. This then was the way and Method of *Trading*, in the firſt Ages of Mankind; when one had eaten or ſpent what was his own, he repair'd to his Neighbour for more, at the ſame time accommodating him with ſome other Thing whereof he ſtood in need, by way of Exchange, the reſpective value of the Things being limited according to

their estimation of their goodness and scarcity, in the first place; and then of their Beauty or Comeliness. And because Oxen and Sheep afforded them the most Commodities, as their skins for Clothing, and their Milk and Flesh for Food, besides other uses to which they were serviceable, they made all their Traffick with *Cattle*, in which their whole wealth consisted. But because 'twas too troublesome a thing for Man to drive always a Flock of Sheep before him, or lead a Cow by the Horn, for making of payment; the Industry of Men encreasing, they cast their Eyes upon that which was in the next degree of most use to them, and most durable; and finding that nothing was of more general use than *Iron* and *Copper*, and especially that the latter was the fairest, and easiest to be melted, and cast into Kettles and other Domestick Utensils, they made choice thereof, mutually giving and receiving it, by Weight,

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for other things they needed, and divided it by *Pounds*, which word ſtill remains amongſt us, to ſignifie Twenty Shillings, which is very near the juſt value that a Pound of *Copper* had in thoſe days. And to ſave the Labour of weighing this *Pound*, and the parts of it, they ſtamp'd upon one ſide the Figure of a *Ship*, with the weight and value; and on the other ſide the Picture of one of thoſe *Beaſts*, which are deſign'd by the word *Pecus*, whence *Money* came to be call'd *Pecunia*. Afterwards the *Arms* of the *Prince* were ſubſtituted inſtead of the *Ship*, and *Conſtantine* put a *Croſs* in the place of the *Beaſt*. Now becauſe, in the old *Gauliſh* Language, a *Ship* was call'd *Pile* (whence the Word *Pilote* remains to this day) the ſide of the *Coin* on which the *Ship* was is ſtill call'd *Pile*, and the other *Croſs*, how different ſtamps ſoever have ſucceeded ſince. This was the *firſt Original* of *Trade*, which from a narrow Commerce between the Hills, the Vallies, the Woods, the Plains, and the Rivers,

that border'd one upon another, is since extended to the whole Compass of the Earth. And now 'tis high time to dismiss this Subject of *Navigation* and *Trade*; and therefore having already demonstrated, how much the Present Age hath transcended Former Ages in those three parts of Learning, *viz. Anatomy*, *Geography*, and *Navigation*, I now proceed.

If from the first Ages of the World we turn our eyes to latter Times, I mean, to the Times of *Popish* Darkness, we shall Comparatively find that great is the light we now enjoy. Ignorance (we know) is the Mother of their Devotion and the very Essence of *Popery*, therefore no wonder that before the Reformation Learning was at so low an Ebb. That the *Clergy* had scarce Knowledge enough, to read the Liturgy, and the Laity no more Clarkship that to save them from Hanging. King *Alfred* in his Preface upon the *Pastorals* of St. *Gregory* (which he translated into *English*) says, That when

when he came first to his Kingdom, He knew not one *Priest* on the South side of the River *Humber*, that understood his Service in *Latine*, or that could Translate an Epistle into English. *Vignier* in his *Ecclesiastical History* affirms, That *Gerbertus* the first Archbishop of *Rhemes* and *Ravenna*, afterwards *Pope*, under the name of *Silvester* the Second, was reputed a *Magician*, because he was well skill'd in the *Mathematicks*. (Thus, saith Dr. *Fuller*, do Ignorant People count all *Circles* above their own *Sphere* to be *Conjuring*, and presently cry out, those Things are done by the *Black Art*, for which their dim Eyes can see no Colour in reason. And in such Cases, when they cannot fly up to *Heaven* to make it a *Miracle*, they fetch it from *Hell* to make it *Magick*.) And how low Learning ran in *England* amongst the Native Nobility, in the Reign of King *Henry* the *Sixth*, too plainly appears by the *Motto* on the Sword of the *Martial*, Earl of *Shrewsbury*, which

which was, *Sum Talboti, pro Occidere in inimicos meos*, the best Latin that Noble Lord, and perchance his Chaplains too (in that Age) could afford. *Erasmus* tells us, That some Divines in his time undertook to prove, that *Hereticks* ought to be put to Death, from those Words of the Apostle, *Hæreticum Hominem devita*, which it seems they understood, as if he had said, *De vitâ tolle*. I have read of two *Fryars* disputing whether God had made any more *Worlds* than One; the One wisely alledging that passage of the Gospel touching the ten *Lepers* which were cleans'd, *Annon Decem facti sunt Mundi?* As if God had made Ten Worlds; the other (with great gravity) looking into the Text, replies as wisely, with the words immediately following, *Sed ubi sunt Novem?* But what is become of the Nine? So as from thence he would prove but one to be left. An old Priest in *Henry* the *Eight*'s time, being reprov'd for reading in his ServiceBook *Mumpsimus Domine*, instead

instead of *Sumpſimus*, reply'd, He had now us'd *Mumpſimus* theſe thirty Years, and for his part he would not leave his old *Mumpſimus* for their new *Sumpſimus*. At any time when their *Prieſts* were taken breaking *Priſcian*'s head, their Common Defence was, thoſe words of St. *Gregory*, *Non debent verba cæleſtis Oraculi ſubeſſe regulis Donati*, The words of the Heavenly Oracles ought not to be Subject to the Rules of *Donatus*. But theſe are Stories ſo well known, that I ought to Apologiſe for inſiſting ſo long upon them; and therefore to proceed to the laſt *Queſtion. viz.* Whether Men do now live to as great an Age, as they did formerly? It muſt be granted, That in the firſt Ages of the World, both before and for ſome time after the *Flood*, Men did generally arrive to a much greater Age, than they have done ſince. But this is certainly to be attributed to ſome *extraordinary Cauſe*, and not to the *Ordinary Courſe of Nature*. The World (we know) was then to

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be repleniſh'd with Inhabitants, which could not ſo ſpeedily be done, but by an extraordinary Multiplication of Mankind; Neither could that be done, but by the long lives of Men. And again, Arts and Sciences were then to be planted, for the better effecting whereof, it was requiſite, that the ſame Men ſhould have the Experience and Obſervation of many Ages. We know it was the Complaint of *Hippocrates*, *Ars longa, Vita brevis*; And therefore Almighty God, in his Wiſdom did then proportion Mens *Lives* to the length of *Arts*: And as God gave them this ſpecial Priviledge to live long; ſo 'tis probable he gave them withal a Temper, and Conſtitution of Body, anſwerable thereunto. As alſo the *Food* wherewith they were nouriſh'd, eſpecially before the *Flood*, may well be thought to have been more *wholeſome* and *nutritive*, and the *Plants* more *Medicinal*: And happily the *Influence* of the *Heavens* was at that time,

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in that Climate where the *Patriarchs* liv'd, more benigne and favourable. Theſe (as far as we poor Mortals can Conjecture) might be the reaſons, why Divine Providence did aſſign to thoſe firſt Inhabitants ſo long a leaſe of their Lives. But in after-times, when the World was fully Peopl'd, and Arts and Sciences were Propagated, then it pleas'd the ſame Divine Providence to curtail, and abridge the Life of Man; inſomuch that in *Moſes*'s time the common Standard of humane Life was *Seventy*, or at moſt *Eighty Years*. And ſo it was ever after counted. Hence alſo *Herodotus* ſets the longeſt Bounds of Man's Life to be but Eighty Years. *Barzillai* was ſaid to be a very Old Man, and yet he liv'd but to fourſcore: And *David* was full of Days, yet but Seventy Years Old. *Solomon*, as Divines Conjecture, was not Sixty, yet it is ſaid, *when Solomon was Old*. The Learned *Johannes Jonſtonius* tells us, That in all the Records of the *Roman*, *Greek*, *French*,

and

and *German* Emperours, there were but four who liv'd to be fourscore. And our *English* Chronicle informs us, That Queen *Elizabeth* out-liv'd all her Predecessors from *William* the Conquerour. *Petrus Crinitus* saith, that the *Ægyptians* by a subtile Conjecture, taken from the Weight of the *Heart*, found out within what bounds the Life of Man was included; they affirming, That it was scarce possible for a Man to live above a Hundred Years: For, said they, the *Heart* every Year till Fifty increased two *Drams*, and from thence to an hundred Years it decreased as much, and so returning to its original Weight, it can then make no further Progress. Now, though this Observation does certainly carry in it more of *Curiosity* than *Truth*, yet doth it plainly shew, That the common Opinion of the *Ancients*, was, That Men did seldom live above a Hundred Years. And we find, the Learned *Varro* was also of the same Belief, and there-

therefore he tells us, They call'd the ſpace of a Hundred Years, *Seculum*, from *Senex*, an old Man, becauſe they thought that was the utmoſt Period of Mans life. Thus then we ſee, That Men live now as long as they did formerly; and that for theſe three Thouſand Years at leaſt there hath been no Alteration. It is the Obſervation of that great Philoſopher, the Lord *Verulam*, *Decurſus Seculorum, & Succeſſio Propaginis, nihil videntur omninò demere de Diuturnitate vitæ*; The Courſe of Times, and Succeſſion of Ages, ſeem to have no whit abated from the length of Mens Lives. *No doubt*, ſays that Noble Lord, *There are times in all Countrys, wherein Men live either longer or ſhorter; longer, moſt commonly when the Times are Barbarous, and the Diet more plain, and more given to bodily Exercise; ſhorter, when they are more Civil, and there is more Luxury and Idleneſs; But in theſe Things there is a Viciſſitude and Revolution; The Succeſſion*

ceſſion of Generations alters it not. If it did, the firſt Man in reaſon ſhould have lived longeſt, and the Son ſhould ſtill come ſhort of his Fathers Age; So that whereas *Moſes* tells us, That the Days of Man in his time were Threeſcore Years and Ten, by this reckoning they might well enough by this time be brought to ten, or twenty, or thirty at the moſt. In a Word, we will not ſay, but that Accidents, Accidental Occurrences, Intemperance, ill and noxious Effluvia from the Earth, Waters, and intemperature of the Air, and other Accidents may in theſe latter Ages of the World produce ſome ſuch Diſeaſes, and accidental Diſorders, as may poſſibly more infeſt Mankind, and occaſion more Mortality, than in former Ages: But as to the regular and ordinary Courſe of Natural Procedure and State of Things with Mankind, yea and other Animals, there ſeems to be little or no decay, or Variation from what hath been formerly.

ESSAY VI.

Of PASSION; *And whether the* PASSIONS *are an* Advantage, *or* Diſadvantage *to Men.*

'TWAS the uſual ſaying of a very Ingenuous Perſon, *That Paſſionate Men, like Yorkſhire Hounds, are apt to over-run the Scent.* They have not the Patience to pauſe and deliberate, but *Quicquid in Buccam venerit*, whatſoever they think they ſpeak; and therefore it is, they often run into ſuch groſs Abſurdities; for as *Ariſtotle* well obſerves, *Qui citò pronunciat, ad pauca reſpicit.* A mind tranſported with Paſſion, rejects the beſt Reaſons, and retains the

worſt Opinions; like a *Bolter*, which lets the *Flour* paſs, and keeps nothing but the *Bran*. Therefore *Plato* ſpeaking of *Paſſionate* Perſons, ſays, They are like Men who ſtand upon their Heads, they ſee all things the wrong way. How inconſiſtent *Paſſion* and *Reaſon* is, *Seneca* ſeems to intimate, by that Expreſſion of his *Nemo conſilium cum Clamore dat*: And how incompatible the Spirit of God and Paſſion is, the Holy Scriptures themſelves do plainly ſhew; For when *Elias* was upon the Mountain, there came a Whirlwind, and God was not there; then an Earthquake, and God was not there; But at laſt came a ſtill Voice, and God was there. The Scripture likewiſe exhorteth us, *To poſſeſs our Souls in Patience*; intimating, according to the Lord *Bacon's* Paraphraſe, *That whoſoever is out of Patience, is out of the Poſſeſſion of his Soul*; Well therefore might the Poets call *Anger a ſhort Madneſs*: For look upon an Angry Man, when he is in the height of

of his Rage, and you may ſee all *Africa*, and its Prodigies in him: He is more ſavage than the Tygers there; Blow him into a Flame, and you may ſee *Vulcano's*, *Hurricans*, and *Boraſco's* in him. And certainly were he (while his Paſſion was thus raging) forc'd to look himſelf in the Glaſs, thoſe very Convulſions and Diſtortions his Anger had put him into, would ſoon ſhame him into a better temper. In ſhort, there is no ſurer Argument of a great Mind, than not to be tranſported to Anger by any Accident whatſoever; The Clouds and Tempeſts are form'd below, but all above is quiet and ſerene; which is the true Emblem of a Brave Man, that ſurpaſſes all Provocations, and Lives within himſelf. This made a great Philoſopher ſay, That a Wiſe Man ought to be like the *Caſpian Sea*, which is ſaid never to *Ebb* or *Flow*. But from this exceſs of the Paſſions to infer an utter uſeleſſneſs of them, to me ſeems very unreaſo-

nable: For I cannot think Nature is such a severe Step-Dame, as that by her Planting these Passions in us, she design'd only to Plague and Torment us: I therefore conclude, There is an honest and an innocent use of them. As *Bias* once said of the Tongue, that it was the best and worst part of Man, so may we of the Affections; *Nec meliores unquam servos, nec Dominos sentit Natura Deteriores*, They are the best Servants, but the worst Masters that Nature can have; like the Winds, which being moderate, carry the Ship; but drown it, being tempestuous. And as it is observed in greater States, so does the same hold true in Man's little Common-wealth, that those who are the fittest for Service, if once they become Mutinous, always prove the most dangerous sort of Enemies: And thus the old Rule, *Corruptio Optimi Pessima*, holds true. I know there have been several Modern *Stoicks*, who with a *zeal* much transcending their *Knowledge*, have declaim'd

declaim'd againſt the Paſſions; Nothing leſs than an utter Extripation will ſatisfie theſe Men: They are not contented with our keeping them under, and retaining them upon the ſame terms, as *Abraham did thoſe Domeſticks he bought with his Money*, whom the Scriptures ſaith, *He both Circumcis'd, and kept as Servants*; But they tell us, that the Mind ought to deal with its Affections, juſt as *Pharaoh* would have dealt with the *Jews-Males*, whom he thought it beſt to cut off, for fear they might (ſome time or other) be in a condition to make head againſt him. But whether this be reaſonable or no, let any Man judge: Becauſe the Paſſions are now and then diſorderly, muſt we therefore wiſh there were no Paſſions? No certainly; for this would be every whit as unreaſonable, as to wiſh there were no *Rivers* in the world, becauſe it ſometimes happens, that by their overflowing we receive great Detriment. When I conſider, That

our Blessed Saviour, who took upon him all our *Natural* Infirmities, but none of our *Sinful*; has been seen to *Weep*, to be *Sorrowful*, to *Pity*, and to be *Angry*: I cannot but then conclude, *That a Man may be Angry and Sin not.* It is not the bare Agitation, but the Sediment at the bottom that troubles and defiles the Water. The Passions are so far from being always hurtful, that we read of several that have receiv'd great advantages from them. For *Wit* proceeds from Active Spirits, or a good Degree of Heat in the Brain; And therefore they, who have been deny'd by Nature this Faculty, and will not take the Pains by Study and Exercise to improve their Parts, do often times encrease their Heat by some high Passion, and so appear more Witty and Ingenious than at other times, when their Spirits (being as it were benumm'd with Cold) are not able to exert themselves: And from hence came that known saying, *Vexatio dat Intellectum,*

tellectum. Seneca, hearing a dull Orator make a moſt Eloquent Harangue the very day his Son dy'd, cry'd out, *Magna pars Eloquentiæ eſt Dolor*; ſo *Polus* the Actor, to enable him to make a more lively Repreſentation of the Grief of a Father upon the Body of his Deceaſed Son, brought in an *Urn* the Aſhes of his own Son newly Dead. So much for the Paſſion of Grief. Then for Anger, *Si Natura negat, Facit Indignatio verſum. Archilochus* and *Hipponaux* were two very indifferent Poets, yet in meer Spleen and Malice, to be revenged of two Perſons that had injur'd them, invented thoſe Doggrel ſorts of Verſes, *Iambicks* and *Scazons*, which they did to ſuch a Perfection, that their Adverſaries deſpairing of ever being able to anſwer them, made away themſelves. And as for the Paſſion of Love, let the Smith of *Antwerp* paſs for an Inſtance; who being rejected by his Sweet-Heart becauſe of his dirty Profeſſion, chang'd his Hammers and

Anvil, for Pencils and Tables, and ſo from an Inconſiderable Black-Smith, he became the moſt noted Painter of his time. Thus we ſee, the Paſſions, if rightly manag'd, are of great Uſe and Service to us; But if once we ſuffer them to grow headſtrong, Lions, Wolves, and Tygers are more governable. We too well know, there is not any one thing hath done more hurt to the Chriſtian Religion, than the Spirit of Paſſion; as is moſt evident by thoſe many late unhappy Diſputes and Controverſies amongſt us. 'Tis ſtrange, that Men cannot talk of Religion, but at the ſame time they muſt Quarrel too; as if the beſt way of eſtabliſhing the Law of *God*, was by violating the Laws of *Charity*. I thank God my Charity is of an Extenſive Nature; I refrain no man's Company, becauſe his Opinion comes not up to mine; Nor do I think it reaſonable, that a difference in Opinion ſhould divide an Affection. Mens Underſtandings are not

not all of one Size and Temper; and therefore it cannot be imagin'd, there ever will be ſuch a Conſonancy, and Uniformity of Judgment amongſt all Men, no, not amongſt Wiſe and Good Men, but that in many things, yea and thoſe ſometimes of great Importance, they may and will diſſent one from another unto the Worlds end. But it is one thing to *Diſſent from*, and another, to be at *Diſcord with*, a Man: *Ita diſſenſi ab illo* (ſays *Tully* concerning himſelf and *Cato*) *ut in diſjunctione ſententiæ, conjuncti tamen amicitiâ maneremus.* 'Tis an excellent Rule ſaith Biſhop *Wilkins*, *to be obſerv'd in all Diſputes, That Men ſhould give ſoft words, and hard Arguments: That they ſhould not ſo much ſtrive to vex, as to convince an Enemy.* If this were but diligently practis'd in all Caſes, and on all ſides, we might in a good Meaſure be freed from thoſe vexations in the ſearch of Truth, which the Wiſe *Solomon*, by his own Experience, did ſo

ſo much complain of, when he told us, That *in much Wiſdom there is much Grief, and he that encreaſeth Knowledge, encreaſeth Sorrow*. There is nothing ſo impertinent in Diſputes and Controverſies, as Anger and Paſſion: For every Man is fond of his own Notions, and no Man cares to be Huff'd and Hector'd out of it; and therefore this Bluſtering way is ſo far from inclining us to yield to Mens Opinions, that it rather hardens us againſt them, by giving us a prejudice to their Perſons. For my part, I love to ſpeak of *Perſons* with Civility, but of *Things* with Freedom; and therefore I abhor the Practice of Many, who write, as if they thought *Railing* at any Mans Perſon, or Wrangling about his Words, neceſſary to the Confutation of his *Opinions*; Methinks, it is as unwiſe, as provoking; for if I civily endeavour to reaſon a Man out of his *Opinions*, I make my ſelf but one Work to do, namely, to convince his Underſtanding; but

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if in a bitter or exaſperating Way, I oppoſe his Errors, I encreaſe the difficulties I wou'd ſurmount, and have as well his *Affections* againſt Me, as his *Judgment*: And it is very uneaſie to make a *Proſelyte* of him, who not only differs from us, but is an Enemy to us. Beſides, as a *Mad-Dog* by biting others, is wont to make thoſe he bites run Mad like himſelf; So, theſe *Provoking Writers*, are wont to enrage thoſe they offend, and infect them alſo with their own virulent Diſtemper. In a Word then, They are the Gentle Inſinuations which pierce, as Oil is the moſt penetrating of all Liquors; And the beſt way of *Proſelyting* Men, is to gain their Affections. If Diſputes could be manag'd with Temper and Moderation, Men might certainly reap great benefit by them: But our unruly Paſſions do ſo much get the Aſcendant over our Underſtandings, that this is a thing rather to be wiſh'd, than to be expected. Upon this Conſideration was it, That

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the great *Montaign* was for ſuppreſſing and hindering all Diſputes and Controverſies: And much of the ſame Mind was the Philoſopher *Plato*, who in his *Republick* prohibits this Exerciſe to Fools and ill-bred People. I think, there is not any Man ſo ignorant, but knows, That nothing hath been a greater Scandal to the Reformed Religion, either among *Heathens*, *Mahometans*, or *Papiſts*; nay, nor hath given a fairer occaſion for bringing in of Atheiſm and Infidelity, than our Diviſions and Animoſities, which proceed from our many Controverſies and Diſputes of Religion. Indeed, our Controverſies about Religion, ſaith the Learned *Stillingfleet*, have brought at laſt even Religion it ſelf into a Controverſie: For weaker heads, ſaith he, when they once perceive the Battlements ſhake, are apt to ſuſpect the Foundation it ſelf ſtands not firm; and if they ſee any thing call'd in Queſtion, they preſently conclude, there is nothing certain.

Luther,

Luther, observing how prejudicial School-Divinity had been to the Christian Religion, crys out, *Quam primum apparuit Theologia Scholastica, evanuit Theologia Crucis.* The *School-Men* have spun the *Thread* too fine, and made *Christianity* look liker a Course of *Philosophy*, than a *System* of *Faith*, and *Supernatural Revelation*: So that the Spirit of it evaporates into Niceties and Exercises of the Brain; and the Contention is not for *Truth* but *Victory*. Indeed, when I consider the Works of the *School-Men*, it puts into my Thoughts, how far more importantly a good Method of *Thinking*, and a right Course of Apprehending Things, does contribute towards the attaining of Perfection in true Knowledge, than the strongest and most vigorous Wit in the World, can do without them. It cannot without Injustice be deny'd, That they were Men of extraordinary strength of Mind: They had a great Quickness of Imagination, and Subtilty of Distinguishing: They very

very well understood the Consequence of Propositions: Their Natural Endowments were Excellent: Their Industry Commendable: But they lighted on a wrong Path at first, and wanted Matter to contrive; And so, like the *Indians*, only expressed a wonderful Artifice, in the ordering of the same Feathers into a thousand varieties of Figures. But after all that can be said in their Commendation, we must needs own, That nothing hath been of more mischievous Consequence to Christian Religion than *School-Divinity*. I know it is much controverted amongst the Learned, how this *School-Learning* came first to be set up: But to give *Aristotle* his due, I think it may easily be prov'd, That he was not the chief Author of this *Sophistick* kind of Disputation, which now reigns in our *Schools*, but rather the *Arabians*, *Averroes* and *Avicenna*, his Commentators; who being wholly unacquainted with the *Greek* Tongue, were fain to depend upon

upon the *Verſions* of *Ariſtotle*, which being very imperfect, left them under great Darkneſs and Ignorance touching *Ariſtotle's* Senſe and Meaning; whence there ſprang a world of *Unintelligible Terms*, and *Diſtinctions*, with as many *Sophiſtick Diſputes* and *Controverſies*. Theſe the *School-Men* greedily lick'd up (as the *Minor Poets* what came from *Homer*) and incorporated with their *Theology*; which fill'd the Univerſities of *France*, (where this *School-Divinity* was firſt broach'd,) and *England* (which had continual Recourſe to *Paris* for Learning) with nothing but vain λογομαχία, or ſtriſe about Words inſtead of ſolid *Phyloſophy* and *Divinity*; far worſe than what was to be found in the Pagan *Schools*. Which vain *Itch* of *Diſputation* hath proved the *Scab* of the *Church*, as hath been obſerv'd by many Learned Men. When Men will be wiſer than God, and in their fooliſh Wiſdom think it fit to add their ſtrength to Gods weakneſs, as a ſpeedier and ſurer

way

way to eſtabliſh the Truth; then does God, to convice them of their folly, ſuffer that ſtrong Man, the Enemy of the Goſpel, (whom none but his almighty Arm can bind and Maſter) to come, and ſow his Tares of Diviſion, which ſoon over-runs the good Seed of the Church, and ſo brings all to Confuſion. Thus then, by our fooliſh Notions and Conceptions do we often ſtain and dilute the very Fountain it ſelf. And as the *Jews* dealt with the Bleſſed *Jeſus*, ſo do we now with his Holy Religion, by platting its head with a Crown of Thorns. And this is that, that hath robb'd the Chriſtian World of its Unity and Peace, and made the Church the Stage of Everlaſting Contentions. For nothing puts Men more out of humour one with another, than Schiſms and unneceſſary Breaches of Church Communion: This naturally ſours the Tempers of Men, and alienates their Affections to the higheſt Degree; for both Parties endeavouring to

vindicate

vindicate themſelves, are forc'd to recriminate, and theſe Recriminations always end in Heat and Paſſion; And ſo, like two *Flints* ſtruck together, they will be continually ſparkling and ſpitting fire at one another, till they have kindled the Quarrel into an inquenchable Flame. It is the Learned *Selden's* Obſervation, That *Diſputes* in *Religion* will never be ended, becauſe there wants a *Meaſure*, by which the Buſineſs wou'd be decided. 'Tis juſt as if two Men were at Bowls, and both judg'd by the Eye; *One* ſays, 'tis his Caſt, the *Other* ſays, 'tis my Caſt; and having no *Meaſure*, the Diſpute is Eternal. I remember, *Ben. Johnſon* ſatyrically expreſſes the vain Diſputes of *Divines* by *Inigo Lanthorn*, diſputing with his *Puppet* in *Bartholomew Fair*. *It is ſo*; *It is not ſo*; *It is ſo*; *It is not ſo*; crying thus one to another a Quarter of an Hour together. Thus we ſee, how much even Religion ſuffers by theſe unhappy Diſputes and Quarrels among

us: For there is nothing does more abate the inward ſtrength of Religion, than when it is rarified into Airy Notions and Speculations; This (indeed) gnaws and conſumes the very Vitals, and in a ſhort time will quite deſtroy the ſubſtance of it. It was the *Motto* of the Primitive Chriſtians, *Non magna loquimur, ſed vivimus*, our Religion conſiſts not in *Talking*, but in *Doing* Great Things. But may not the *Reverſe* of this be properly apply'd to the Preſent Age, *viz. Non vivimus, ſed Magna Loquimur.* Religion is now become one of the *Artes Sermocinales*, a Talkative Myſtery, an Art not to govern the *Mind*, and to regulate the *Actions*, but to Frame and Faſhion *Diſcourſe*. The *Eſſence* and *being* of *Chriſtianity* is *Practice*; and according to that Teſt, where almoſt can it be ſaid to exiſt in the World? 'Tis true we have ſome Images and Shaddows of it: Some have taken its Picture, but the Subſtance and Solid Body is vaniſh'd,

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resolv'd into Air, and like the Fable of the *Sybills* being worn into a *Voice*, we have turn'd it into a meer *Noise* and *Sound*; nay, which is worse, into an *Eccho*, that flattering complying Voice, which Reverberates every Mans own Language to him: Men dictate to their *Religion*, and then will needs persuade Themselves and others, That their *Religion* dictates to *them*, and so will have the *Rebounds* of their own Fancy pass for *Divine Oracles*. And now to conclude, 'tis no wonder, that our Disputes and Controversies have so ill an effect, when our unruly Passions have so great a share in them. For, as we have said before, the Passions if not moderated, are the Brutish Part in us; and therefore, when we transform our selves into *Beasts*, it is not to be supposed we can Act like *Men*.

ESSAY VII.

The Variety of OPINIONS: *Whence it proceeds: The uncertainty of Humane Knowledge.*

ALL our several *Opinions* are nothing but the meer various Tasts of several Minds, fram'd partly by our several Natures, partly by our different Educations, and Instructions, and partly by the various Encounters, which we have met with in our ways of Life. Hence it is, that *Quot Homines, tot Sententiæ, Opinions* are as numerous as Mankind it self; and that the several Constitutions of our Minds, differ no less than

than those of our Bodies. There are as many Internal Forms of the Mind, as there are External Figures of Men: And the Soul of Man hath its Palat, as well as the Body; *Opinion* being nothing but the Gusto or Relish of the Soul: Nay, some have been so Critical, as to affirm, That there is so great a Correspondence betwixt the one and the other, that those who are of a different Diet, are generally observ'd to be of different Opinions; and the Learned Dr. *Harvey* gives this for the reason, Because (says he) a different Diet sends up different *Steams* to the Head, and according to these *Steams* are Mens *Opinions*. But this sounding more like a *Notion* than a *Truth*, we shall lay no stress upon it, but proceed. There is (then) a certain Congruity of some Opinions to the particular Tempers of some Men; and therefore we see, how readily such Doctrines, as suit themselves to the particular Inclination of the Mind, or Understanding, are

embraced, and received; whereas those that are opposite to it, are commonly rejected with the greatest contempt imaginable. Thus do we Love, and Hate without being able to give a Reason why. Some Faces both of Persons, and Things, we admire and doat on; to others, much better deserving our esteem, we can scarcely afford a common Civility. Indeed, the dull and unactive Spirits, that concern not themselves in *Theory*, do seldom take the trouble to examine Matters, but taking Things in the Gross, follow the Common Belief, and are for keeping the beaten Road; But those, whose Minds are of a Brisker, and more Vigorous Constitution, will fall into that of their particular *Crasis*. Hence then, I say, is it, we find Men taking in some particular *Opinions* with strange Pleasure and Satisfaction, upon their very first Proposals; when at the same time they will not hearken to others, though they recommend themselves with a much greater strength of Reason.

Reaſon. Thus it is eaſie to diſtinguiſh in moſt Men, two Sorts of *Opinions*; *Opinions* that grow upon Mens Complexions, and *Opinions* that are the Reſults of their Reaſon; and we meet with very few that are of a Temperament ſo equal, or a Conſtitution ſo even poiſed, but that they encline to one ſet of *Opinions* rather than another, antecedently to all proofs of Reaſon: And when they have eſpouſed their *Opinions* from that ſecret *Sympathy*, then they find out as good Reaſons as they can to maintain them, and ſay, nay think ſometimes, that 'twas for the ſake of thoſe Reaſons, that they firſt embraced them. But we may commonly diſtinguiſh theſe *Inclination-Opinions* from the *Rational*, becauſe we find them accompanied with more *Heat* than *Light*, a great deal of eagerneſs and impatience in defending of them, and but ſlender Arguments. In a Word, almoſt every one is ſatisfied, That there is a particular Genius, or ſpecial In-

clination in Mens Minds, and that some *Opinions* do naturally make a much greater impression than others; but the *vexata Quæstio* is, how, or from whence this *Temperament* of the *Mind* proceeds. Some therefore tell us, That this great Diversity of the Operations of the Mind, is to be ascribed to the Souls Dependance upon the Body, and that a Good, or Bad Disposition of the *Organical* Parts, does certainly render the Soul either Vigorous or Unactive in its several Operations. Whatsoever defect (then) we may perceive in some Men, we are not to think it proceeds from any Deficiency in the Soul, but from the Coexistence it has with a Body ill dispos'd for Assistance and Information. For he who is carried in a Coach, (as the Body is *Vehiculum Animæ*) though he himself could go much faster, must yet receive such Motion as that affords; And Water, which is convey'd through Pipes and Aqueducts, though its Motion by it self would

would have been otherwiſe, muſt yet then be confin'd and limited by the Poſture and Proportion of the Veſſels through which it paſſes. Hence we are told, That ſome Men are even by Nature, and Complexion, inclin'd to Vertue and Goodneſs; as it was ſaid of *Clitus*, (whom *Alexander* in a Drunken humour ſlew,) *That he had Vertues by Nature, and Vices by Accident*; And that others, even by the oddneſs of their particular Make and Contexture, are determin'd to Actions of Vice. It was a received Opinion among the Ancients, That outward Beauty, was an infallible Argument of inward Beauty; and ſo on the contrary, That a deformed Body was a true Index of a deformed Mind, or an ill Nature. Hence was that of the Poet:

Claudatibi mens eſt, ut pes: Natura notaſque
Exterior certas Interioris habet.

As

As alſo that of *Martial, Lib.* 12. *Epigram* 54.

Crine ruber, niger ore, brevis pede, lumine læſus:
Rem magnam præſtas, Zoile, ſi bonus es.

It was alſo the ſaying of *Victorinus, In diſtorta Membra virtus cadere non poteſt*: And *Pythagoras* was ſo bigotted to this Opinion, that he would never admit into his School any that had the leaſt Natural Blemiſh or Deformity. Upon this general Opinion was grounded that common Saying, *Cave tibi ab iis, quos Natura Signavit*, which we may render thus, *Whom God hath Markt, let Man Mark.* And therefore *Homer*, ſpeaking of the ſeveral ill Qualities of *Therſites*, takes care to fit him with a Body ſuitable to ſuch a Mind. Now, the reaſon (poſſibly) why Nature for the moſt part orders it ſo, may be this; the Method ſhe takes (though imperceptible to

us) is Regular and Mathematical, and therefore probably nothing may more break and disorder that Symmetry she observes, than by matching a good Soul with a deformed Body; for this seems to be *Impar Congressus*, puting things unequally together. But yet this Rule is not so general, as to admit of no Exception, as we may see in the Emperour *Galba*, a Prince of an unhappy outward Figure, of whom it was said, *Ingenium Galbæ male habitat*; The same may be also observed of *Agesilaus*, and some others, (though not many;) and therefore *Seneca* tells us, *Ex casâ vir Magnus exire potest, & ex deformi humilique Corpusculo formosus Animus & Magnus*. I grant indeed, several Examples there are of Great Persons, whose outward Deformities have been very remarkable, and yet we find their Vertues and good Qualities highly celebrated; But yet (possibly) did we but make a narrow search into their Lives, we should find the difference and alteration was chiefly

wrought

wrought by Education or Custom, which often-times over-sways Nature. Thus we see, what a great Correspondency there is betwixt the Soul and the Body, which is such, that they manifestly participate the Affections one of the other: And therefore if the Body be sick, the Soul is alter'd in it's Operations, as we see in high Fevers, and other acute Diseases: And on the contrary, let the Soul be sad or joyful, the Body is so too. Therefore the Sophisters of old were wont to Purge themselves with *Hellebore*; when they would dispute best. For though in its Essence the Soul depends not on the Corporeal Organs, yet it depends upon the same in its Operations, which are different according to the diverse structures of the Organs; which, if they were alike dispos'd, their Actions would be alike in all, and at all times. Whence saith *Aristotle*, if an old Man had a young Mans Eyes, he would see as clear as a Young Man. That Ingenious Master of Poetry,

Mr.

Mr. *Dryden*, ſpeaking of the mutability of *Man*, ſays, That our Minds are perpetually wrought on by the temperament of our Bodies: Which (ſaith he) makes me ſuſpect, they are nearer ally'd, than either our Philoſophers, or School-Divines will allow them to be. I have obſerv'd, ſays *Mountaign*, That when the Body is out of Order, its Companion is ſeldom at eaſe: An ill Dream, or a Cloudy Day, has power to change this wretched Creature, who is ſo proud of a *Reaſonable Soul*, and make him think to day what he thought not yeſterday. The Learned Dr. *Henry More* ſays, *That our Imagination alters, even as our Blood and Spirits are alter'd; And therefore*, ſays he, *as Dreams are the Fancies of thoſe that ſleep, ſo Fancies are but the Dreams of Men awake; And theſe Fancies by day, as thoſe Dreams by Night, will vary and change with the Weather, and preſent Temper of the Body.* Thus experience ſhews us, That ſudden changes of *Weather* do often affect the Brain:

This

This disturbs the Imagination, and gives a new and Melancholy Complection to the Appearances of things. Some Men can scarcely talk *Sense*, unless the Sun shines out, a Cloud is enough to discompose 'em, and they rise and fall with the *Mercury* in the *Weather Glass*. But to proceed; Others are of Opinion, that this great Diversity proceeds from another Cause, to wit, from the *Climat*. *Peter Heylin*, speaking of the Dispersion of the Families of the Sons of *Noah*, says, That though they all descended from one Common Root, yet by the Situations of their several Dwellings, they came to be of several Tempers and Affections; in which they were so different from one another, that they seem'd rather to have been made at first out of several Principles, than to have been deriv'd from one Common Parent. The Ground or Reason of which difference (says *Heylin*) is to be attributed to the different Tempers of those Countries in which they liv'd, and to the different

Influences

Influences of the Heavenly Bodies on those ſeveral Countreys; which do continue ſtill the ſame, though many times the Countreys ſhift and change their old Inhabitants. Thus, if we enquire into the old Characters, which either *Florus*, *Cæſar*, *Tacitus*, or *Juvenal* gave of the old *Britains*, *Gauls*, *Germans*, *Normans*, &c. We ſhall find that the ſame Vertues, and Vices, do ſtill proſper under the ſame Climats, notwithſtanding in moſt of theſe Places the old Inhabitants, or their Breed, are quit wore away. 'Tis obſerv'd, That where the Heaven is always in the ſame Poſture, as toward the *Poles*; or where the Sun heats almoſt in the ſame Degree, as near the *Equator*, (which makes the Days and Nights equal,) the Manners and Inclinations of the People are alſo equal: And on the contrary, Thoſe that by the ſeveral Remotions and Approaches of the Sun have different Conſtitutions of *Air*, receive ſuitable impreſſions from the ſame, which are afterwards manifeſted in their Actions.

Actions. As (therefore) Fruits and Beasts differ according to the several Countries, in which they are; so are Men born more or less Warlike, Just, Temperate, and the like, according to their several *Climats*. And therefore *Plato* thankt God, That he was an *Athenian*, and not a *Theban*. *Plutarch* tells us, That those of the higher part of the City of *Athens* were of a quite contrary humour to those that dwelt about the Gate of *Pyreus*; and it is observ'd, that those who dwell on the North-side of a Mountain, differ as much from those that dwell on the South side, as they do both from those in the Valley. Now, from this Diversity of Mens Tempers, proceed the several Forms, and Constitutions of Government; and thence it is, that in the same Countreys we find little Variation as to Government, but that in all Ages they have still kept to much one and the same Form; the same Genius or Temper ever continuing under the same *Climat*: And whenever any

Country

Country, either by perſwaſion, have voluntarily, or by force, have been compell'd to quit their old Form of Government: yet in proceſs of Time they naturally return into the old Channel. This then is the reaſon, why thoſe who inhabit the moſt Intemperate Climes, are always for preferring the Deſpotick, Arbitrary Rule; whereas thoſe who live under the more temperate, and leſs ſevere Climats, eſpecially in *Europe*, have affected and preferr'd more gentle & moderate Governments, running anciently much into Common-Wealths, and of latter Ages into Principalities, circumſcrib'd by Laws, which differ not ſo much in Nature as in Name. The natural reaſon whereof, ſays that Accompliſh'd Author, *Sir William Temple*, I take to be this, *viz. That in the more Intemperate Climates, the Spirits either exhal'd by Heat, or compreſt by Cold, are render'd faint and ſluggiſh and by that reaſon the Men grow tamer and fitter for Servitude: That in more temperate Regions, the Spirits are*

ſtronger and more active, whereby Men become bolder in the Defence or Recovery of their Liberties. Now by what we have already ſaid, it plainly appears, That the great Variety of Mens Actions and Opinions cannot proceed from the Diverſity of their Souls, which are accounted all equal, but from that of their Bodies; wherein according to the various Tempers thereof, the Soul produces that variety of Manners. Let us not then any longer wonder, to find ſo great a Diverſity of Opinions in the World; ſince it is a thing wholly impoſſible for all Men to be of the ſame mind: For ſo long as Mens Organs are of ſeveral makes, and we live under divers Climats, we muſt neceſſarily have different Sentiments, and Apprehenſions of things. Nor would there be any harm in this Diverſity of Opinions, could Men but diveſt themſelves of that Pride and Arrogance, which makes them ſo fond of Propagating their own Notions. But while every Man pretends to the

the *Spirit of Infallibility*, and must be a *Dictator* to the reſt of Mankind, then there is nothing but Confuſion and Diſorder to be expected. And this was that, which made ſuch Diſturbance, and Embroilments amongſt us in the late times: Every Opinion was made an Article of Faith, and every Article became a Ground of a Quarrel, and every Quarrel made a Faction, and every Faction was Zealous, and all Zeal pretends for God, and whatſoever is for God cannot be too much; and indeed, we were come to that paſs, That we thought we lov'd not God, unleſs we hated our Brother, and that we had not the Vertue of Religion, unleſs we perſecuted all Religions but our own. But let us not deceive our ſelves, for, whatſoever ſome may think, this is not the violence that gains *Heaven*; Nor is there any thing that makes us more unlike God, who is the Father of Mercies, and the God of all Conſolation, than a Furious, Hot, and Perſecuting Spi-

rit. His apprearance was in the ſoft and ſtill Voice, not in Whirlwinds and Hurricanes; and where there is *Spiritus Procellæ*, we may ſatisfie our ſelves it proceeds from another Principle. The *Holy Ghoſt* was pleas'd to appear not in the Form of a *Vultur*, (a ravenous and devouring Creature) but in the ſhape of a *Dove*, the Emblem of *Meekneſs*. The true Church is ſtyl'd by the name of the *Lilly amongſt Thorns*: The *Lilly* does not *Scratch* and *Tear*, that's the Property of *Thorns* and *Briars*, the moſt inconſiderable ſort of ſhrubs. (And indeed, let us but reflect who were the chief Promoters of our late Perſecutions, and we ſhall find they were the ſlighteſt of the *Clergy*, and the moſt Profligate of the *Laity*: None being ſo fit to make Shipwrack of other Mens Conſciences, as thoſe who have none of their own.) The moſt natural and effectual way (then) of Promoting the Bleſſed Goſpel, is, by following its own Rules, and Precepts of Meekneſs and Moderation. Sweetneſs

neſs and Ingenuity will more command Mens Minds, than Paſſion, Sourneſs, and Severity: As the ſoft Pillow ſooner breaks the Flint, than the hardeſt Marble. Therefore when we would convice Men of any Error by the ſtrength of Truth, we ſhould do it with all the tenderneſs, and in the moſt obliging manner we are able. For Truth and Love are two the moſt Charming Things in the World; and when theſe go hand in hand together, there is no Humane Force can withſtand them. But that which proves very miſchievous to many, is their taking that to be *Zeal* for God and Religion, which really is nothing but their own violent and furious Paſſion. True Zeal then is a ſweet, Heavenly, and gentle Fame, which makes us active for God, but always within the Sphear of Love. It never calls for *Fire from Heaven*, to Conſume thoſe who agree not with us in all Points and Circumſtances. It is much of the Nature of that

kind of *Lightning*, (that the Philoſophers tell us of) which melts the *Sword* within, but never ſingeth the *Scabard*: It ſtrives to ſave the Soul but at the ſame time hurteth not the Body. In a word, we may learn what kind of *Zeal* it is we ſhould make uſe of in promoting the Goſpel, by an Emblem of Gods own, given us in the Scriptures, thoſe *Fiery Tongues*, which upon the Day of *Pentecoſt* ſat upon the *Apoſtles*; and that theſe were Innocent Flames, no Man can doubt, for we do not find, that they did ſo much as ſinge an hair of their heads. This then is *true Zeal*, and whatſoever is more than this, proceeds from evil, and is no other than a *Fever* in the Soul. There is not any thing that drives Men more furiouſly, nor that hath more diſturb'd the Peace of Mankind, than *Miſtaken Zeal*. *Odia Religionum ſunt acerbiſſima*, is now grown into a *Proverb*; of all Hatreds, there are none more furious and unnatural, than

than those which arise out of Contrarieties in Religion; and it is generally observ'd, That the less Material their Difference, the more implacable is the Hatred: As the *Turks* think it more acceptable to God, to kill one *Persian*, than seventy Christians. Nothing so vehemently alienates Mens Affections, as variety of Judgment in matters of Religion; Here they cannot disagree, but presently they must fall together by the Ears; and when once Religion divides Mens minds, no other common Interest can unite them; and where Zeal dissolves Friendship, the ties of Nature are not strong enough to reconcile it: And therefore our Saviour tells us, That in this Case Men would forget all the Bonds of Natural Obligation; insomuch that the Father would deliver up his own Child, and the Children their Parents unto Death: As we find, that the Bloody Hatred of *Cain* against *Able* arose from the different Acceptance of their Sacrifice. Nor

indeed is it to be wonder'd, if that enmity grow exceſſive, which hath zeal to kindle it, and pretence of Religion to warrant it: For when that which ſhould reſtrain, and ſet limits to a Paſſion, is made a Party to engage it, and fuel to foment it, no wonder if a Paſſion, which hath no Bounds from Religion, do impoſe none upon it ſelf. And this occaſion of mutual Hatred, we find obſerv'd even in the ridiculous Superſtitions of *Ægypt*, when one Town would kill and eat the Fleſh of another, in zeal to the Calves, or Sheep, or other Creatures, which they did ſeverally worſhip. Now, having ſhew'd how much miſchief *Miſtaken Zeal* has done in the World, I need not ſpend much time in ſhewing the ill Succeſs that Perſecution hath conſtantly been attended with; the Hiſtory of all Ages has done this to my hand. *Sanguis Martyrum, ſemen Eccleſiæ*, is a Truth will laſt to the Worlds End. For there is ſcarce any Man ſo void of Huma-

Humanity, but hath good Nature enough to compaſſionate thoſe that are in miſery, and at the ſame time to ſhew their abhorrence to the Authors of ſuch Cruelties: And therefore, no wonder that Perſecution doth rather encreaſe, than leſſen the number of *Martyrs*: For as it gives moſt Men a prejudice to the *Perſecuting* Party, ſo it enclines them to commiſerate the *Suffering* Party; and this kindneſs to their *Perſons*, does often terminate in the favouring their *Opinions*. How prepoſterous then is it in any State, or Government, to endeavour to force their Subjects to Unity in Religion; when, alas! The experience of all Ages ſhews how impracticable the Thing is. 'Tis true, a State may ſometimes force all its Subjects, to ſubmit to an outward Uniformity in all Things that concern Divine Worſhip; but yet they muſt know, that every publick Diſturbance in the Commonwealth, breaks all thoſe Bonds aſunder of diſſembled Obedience,

dience, and that ſuch Compulſions do both beget and ripen all Diſorders. Thus we ſee, that it is Mens being ſo fond of their own Opinions, which gives the greateſt diſturbance to Mankind; and while we are ſo highly conceited of our own Parts and Abilities, it cannot be otherwiſe. Now the only cure for this ſort of Vanity, is to reflect upon the uncertainty of Humane Knowledge. *Wiſdom* is a *Gift*, that comes from above; 'tis a Talent that few are truſted with. *Fools* will always be the greater Number. *Wiſe* Men are like *Timber-Trees* in a Wood, but thin planted in the World, here and there One. We ſee in all *Greece* there were but Seven. A *Plurality* of *Voices*, 'tis true, carries the Queſtion in all our Debates, but rather as an Expedient for *Peace*, than any Eviction of *Right*. Take the World throughout, and you will find a Thouſand *Blockheads* to one *Wiſe* Man; *Flies* breed in *Swarms*, but *Lions* do not come into

to the world by *Litters.* There is Folly (then) in all the Sons of Men, They know but a very ſmall part of the Things that are in the World; and thoſe things they do know, they know but in part. And beſides their natural Ignorance, what thro' Precipitancy, Miſinformation, Prejudice, Partial Affections, and ſeveral other Cauſes, they are ſubject to many groſs Miſtakes and Errors: Whereby it cometh to paſs, That the *Wiſeſt* Men ſometimes are fouly over-ſeen, and are fain to take up the *Fool's* Plea, and to cry, *Non putaram,* Who *cou'd have thought it?*

There is no Head ſo ſound or ſtrong, but hath ſome ſoft Place, nor is any Mans Underſtanding ſo perfect and ſo clear, as to have no *Flaw*, nor *Dark Water* in it. The *French* tell us, That every Man hath his *Foible,* his Blind or Weak ſide, and that there is no Man ſo *Wiſe,* but hath more or leſs of the *Fool* in him. Every Man hath ſome-

ſomething whereby he may be taken; and it is hard to find that *Fiſh*, that at ſome time or other will not bite, if the Bait be ſuch as likes him. *One* Man is tranſported out of his Reaſon, and his Honeſty, by ſenſual Pleaſures; *Another* by Money, perhaps, or by Ambition. Every Man, in ſhort, by Somewhat or Other: And it is but ſtriking him in the right Vein, to do his Buſineſs. Men are every jot as eaſily impos'd upon, as *Birds*, *Beaſts*, or *Fiſhes*; while the Eagerneſs of our Appetites ſuſpends the Exerciſe of our Reaſon. A *Treat*, a *Woman*, or a *Battle* is the ſame thing to us, that a *Worm*, a *Gudgeon*, a *Grain* of *Corn*, or a *Piece* of *Fleſh* is to theſe Animals: We ſnap at the *Bait*, without ever dreaming of the *Hook*, the *Trap*, or the *Snare*, that goes along with it. Upon theſe Conſiderations therefore was it, That theſe ſeveral Sentences were grounded; *Nemo Mortalium omnibus Horis Sapit*—— *Auriculas Aſini Quis non habet*——

Stulto-

Stultorum plena ſunt Omnia——Quiſque ſuos patimur Manes——All which ſayings, are but different *Phraſes* and *Dialects* to expreſs the Frailty and Imperfection of Humane Knowledge. The reaſon then, why wiſe Men do never appear ſo peremptory, and Dogmatical as others, is, becauſe they very well know, there are but few things ſo certain, as to create much boldneſs, and confidence of Opinion. It was probably upon this Conſideration, that the wiſe *Romans* ſhew'd ſo much Modeſty, when they gave their Sentiments and Opinions, concluding ſtill for the moſt part with theſe two words, *ITA VIDETUR.* 'Tis the Obſervation of the witty *Mountaign*, *That as amongſt wiſe Men he is the wiſeſt, that thinks he knows leaſt; So amongſt Fools he is the greateſt, that thinks he knows moſt.* Humane Nature is very fallible, the wiſeſt of Men do ſometimes err, and therefore at the very Inſtant a Man ſeems *moſt poſitive*, how does he know but he may

may be *moſt Miſtaken?* Do not even our very Senſes ſometime deceive us? And yet moſt of our Conceptions are taken from the Senſes, and we can ſcarce judge of any thing but by the help of Material Images, that are thence convey'd to us, according to that old Rule, *Nihil eſt in Intellectu, Quod non fuit priùs in ſenſu,* Since therefore our Senſes are ſo very fallacious, and from them reſult moſt of Humane Knowledge, how fond and ridiculous is it in any Man to pretend to ſuch an Aſſurance? *Eſt in ipſis rebus Obſcuritas, & in judiciis noſtris Infirmitas,* ſaith *Tully*; ſo ſlight a Thing is Humane Knowledge, That the moſt inconſiderable, and minuteſt Works of Nature, ſerve to Puzzel, and Confound it. *Plato* ſays, That in Man there is no ſuch Thing as *Science* or *Knowledge*, 'tis but barely *Opinion*: and in another place he calls *Opinion*, a Middle Thing betwixt *Ignorance* and *Knowledge*. Indeed, while

while we are in this World, we do but behold by the favour of a Glimmering-Light, the Phantasms and Shadows of Things, which Custom makes us take for Bodies and Truths: All *Humane Knowledge* (then) is defective: As it is, it is but *lesser folly*; which hitting sometimes, fails as Often. And as the *Fools Bolt* does not always Miss, so the Wise Mans *Counsels* do not always prosper. The best Knowledge a Man hath, is but a dim sort of Light; which makes us apt to Stumble, and often puts us to grope out our Way. Our clearest day here is Misty and Hazy: We see not far, and what we do see is in a bad light. In a Word, we may properly be said to see the *wrong side* of the *Hangings*; and let us pretend to what we will, the utmost of *Humane Knowledge*, is but a fair and Hopeful Conjecture.

Through

Through Seas of *Knowledge*, we
our Course advance,
Discovering still new Worlds of
Ignorance;
And these Discoveries make us
all Confess,
That *Sublunary Science* is but
Gueß.
Matters of Fact to Man are only
known,
And what seems more, is meer
Opinion.

Sir *JOH. DENHAM.*

Our Demonstrations are raised upon Principles of our own, not of Universal Nature; and, as the Lord *Bacon* notes, *We take up Opinions, suitable rather to the Analogy of our selves, than that of the Universe.* How unreasonable then are those Men, who are so positive and dogmatical in their own Opinions, that rather than admit of the least Contradiction, chuse to make the whole World an *Aceldama* and a *Babel*?

And

And thus, have we not by ſad Experience found it moſt true, That all the Miſeries, which have attended the variety of Opinions ſince the Reformation, have proceeded from this Grand Miſtake, the making our own private Opinions the Standard of infallible Truth? Whereas all wiſe Men ought to conſider, That truth is a Thing not certainly known; Nay poſſibly, the All-Wiſe God thinks it too dazling a Thing for the Eyes of us poor Mortals, and therefore reſerves it for our Glorified Faculties.

ESSAY VIII.

An ESSAY *of* RELIGION.

THAT Idea which moſt Men have of *God*, is nothing elſe but a Picture of their own Complexions, juſt as the *Ethiopians* pictur'd their *Gods* Black, becauſe they were Black themſelves. And therefore we commonly obſerve, That ſuch as are of a ſour, moroſe Nature, are very apt to frame to themſelves a *God* of their own Temper. Thus do theſe Men vainly imitate the Power of the *Almighty*; who as he at firſt was pleas'd to make *them* after his Image, ſo wou'd they now make *him* after theirs. In this Manner do

we

we Model all that is in *God* to our own Fancies, and inſtead of Believing him what he is, we even make him what we wou'd have him: Like *Micha*, we make us a *God* for our own peculiar Uſe, and form the *Deity* we intend to Worſhip. This then is the reaſon, that we many times repreſent *God* in ſuch falſe Colours, and ſo utterly unlike *Himſelf*; for out of an unreaſonable partiality to our ſelves, we firſt miſtake the Deformities of our own Natures for Perfections, and then Deifie them into *Divine Attributes*. And thus many times it comes to paſs, that our Notions of *God*, are nothing but the Images of *our Selves*, which *Narciſſus* like we fall in love with, for no other Reaſon, but becauſe they reflect our own dear likeneſs. But let us not deceive our ſelves, for whatever our little, narrow Conceits may be, ſtill *God* is the ſame, and will for ever keep up that Character, *I am that I am*. We can therefore no more alter the

true Nature of *God* by our Wild and extravagant Repreſentations of him, than a Deforming *Optick Glaſs* can the Object it diſguiſes. But certainly of all Sorts of Men, none do more miſtake the *Divine Nature*, and by conſequence do greater Miſchief to *Religion*, than thoſe who wou'd perſwade us, That to be truly *Religious*, is to renounce all the Pleaſures of Humane Life; As if *Religion* were a *Caput Mortuum*, a heavy, dull, inſipid thing; that has neither Heat, Life, nor Motion in it: Or were intended for a *Meduſa's* Head to transform Men into Monuments of Stone. Whereas (really) *Religion* is of an Active Principle, it not only elevates the Mind, and invigorates the Fancy; but it admits of Mirth, and pleaſantneſs of Converſation, and indulges us in our Chriſtian Liberties; and for this reaſon, ſays the Lord *Bacon*, *It is no leſs impious to ſhut where God Almighty has open'd, than to open where God Almighty has ſhut.*

But,

But, I ſay, if Men will ſuffer themſelves to be thus impos'd upon, as to Believe, That *Religion* requires any ſuch unneceſſary Rigours and Auſterities, all that can be ſaid, is, The fault does not lye in *Religion*, but in their *Underſtandings*; Nor is this to paint *Religion* like *herſelf*, but rather like one of the *Furies* with nothing but Whips and Snakes about her. And ſo, they Worſhip *God* juſt as the *Indians* do the *Devil*, not as they love him, but becauſe they are afraid of him. It is not therefore to be wonder'd, that ſince their Notions of *God* are ſuch, their Way of Worſhip is agreeable thereunto; And hence it is, That theſe Men ſerve *our* God, juſt as ſome Idolaters Worſhip *theirs*; with painful Convulſions of Body, and unnatural Diſtortions of Face, and all the diſmal ſolemnities of a gloomy Soul, and a dejected Countenance. Now theſe are the Men, who upon all Occaſions are ſo apt to condemn their Brethren, and, as

if they were of God's *Cabinet Councel*, pretend to know the *Final Decrees* of the *Almighty*. But alas! who is ſufficient for theſe Things? Certainly, no Man can render himſelf more fooliſhly ridiculous, than by meddling with theſe *Secrets* of *Heaven*. The *Decrees* of *God* we ſay are *Hidden*, but in the ſame breath we contradict our ſelves, and endeavour to Confute that *Epithet*, by pretending to know them. Methinks our Ignorance in the Creatures, and being ſo far at a loſs as to flie to *Occult Qualities*, which *Scaliger* calls *Ignorantiæ Aſylum*, ſhould check our Curioſity in the Things of God, and teach us to ſit down Contented to reſolve Gods Actions into ſome *Hidden Cauſes*. The Heathen *Seneca* could ſay, *Nunquam Verecundiores debemus eſſe, quàm cùm de Deo Agitur*, Modeſty never becomes us better, than when we ſpeak of God, *qui ut intelligatur tacendum eſt*, as *Arnobius* elegantly expreſſes it, which ſeems to agree with

with that of the *Apoſtle*, who adviſes us *to become Fools, that we may be Wiſe.* Secular ſtates, we ſee, do with a great deal of Jealouſy reſerve their *private Councels*; and ſhall we think *God* ſo ſcrutable, or our ſelves ſo penetrating that none of his *Secrets* can eſcape us? Or if we think him, as indeed he is, unfathomable, why do we thus madly attempt what we confeſs impoſſible? Eſpecially ſince we ſhall not only loſe the thing we ſo vainly purſue, but others we might elſe enjoy. God has given us Rules of Life, which upon the ſevereſt Penalties he requires us to ſtudy and practice; but alas! This we make no part of our Buſineſs, and moſt of our time is taken up in unfolding the *impenetrable Counſels* of *Heaven.* I have read of a *Philoſopher*, who not minding his way, but gazing upon the *Stars*, happen'd to fall into a Ditch: Even ſo is this much our Caſe; while we are prying into the *Stars* to read our *Deſtiny*, and do not re-

gard the neceſſary Duties of *Religion*, we do thereby fall into the *Worſt Fate* they could have portended: And, for my part, I firmly Believe, That the Extravagant Notions ſome Men have had concerning Gods *Decrees*, have reprobated more than thoſe *Decrees* upon which they are ſo willing to charge their Ruine. And, indeed, it is but juſt and reaſonable it ſhould be ſo; for if Men will at this rate tranſcend the Bounds of Modeſty, and uſurp God's Prerogative, they very well deſerve to meet with their own Deſtruction. That *Ark* which devoutly reverenced, brought *Bleſſings*, when curiouſly pry'd into, diffus'd *Peſtilence* and *Death*. Nay, the very *Poets* will tell us, That if we will have *Prometheus's* Fire, we muſt take *Pandora's* Box alſo: And ſure Induſtry cannot be worſe laid out, than thus to fetch home Plagues to our ſelves. Let us then be contented to act within our own Sphear, and no longer ſoar after things *Inſcrutable*

and

and paſt finding out: Let us learn contentedly to be ignorant, where God wou'd not have us knowing; nor think it any diſparagement to acknowledge ſome *Depths* in God, which our ſhallow Reaſon cannot Fathom. *Næ intelligendo faciunt, ut nihil intelligant*; the way to make our ſelves meer Fools, is to affect to know more than God would have us. Juſt as he who affects to pry into the Body of the Sun, by gazing grows ſtark Blind, and ſees leſs then otherwiſe he might by thoſe ſcatter'd Rays in the Air. In a Word, it is the Glory of our *Religion*, that we accknowledge ſuch a *God* as is unſearchable.

And as *Religion* teaches us *Modeſty*, ſo does it likewiſe incline Men to *Meekneſs* and *Goodneſs of Nature*. Of all Vertues and Dignities of the Mind *Goodneſs of Nature* (ſays *Bacon*) is the greateſt, being the very Character of the *Deity*: And without it *Man* is a Buſie, Miſchievous,

chievous, wretched thing; no better than a kind of *Vermin*.

The *Heathen* ſpeaking of *God*, uſually ſtile him by two Attributes, *Optimus & Maximus*, the one importing his *Goodneſs*, the other his *Power*; but we ſee the Precedency is given to his *Goodneſs*, it being *that* wherein *God* himſelf is moſt delighted; and therefore all the Acts of our *Saviour*, while he convers'd on Earth among Men, were purely the effects of, and emanations from, his *tenderneſs* and *Good Nature*. Tho' all God's *Attributes* are *Infinite*, yet this Beloved, Triumphant Attribute of his, his *Mercy*, tranſcends the reſt; and therefore (if it were poſſible) he ſeems herein to be ſomewhat more than *Infinite*. *Tertullian* Obſerves, that the Prime Quality in God is *Goodneſs*; this (ſaith he) is Natural and Eternal; but his *Severity* is caſual and adventitious; the one is proper unto him, the *other* is but borrowed; the *one* inwardly flows from him,

him, the *other* is inwardly fixed upon him. Almighty God may be ſaid to meaſure his *Judgments* by the *Ordinary Cubit*, but his *Mercies* by the *Cubit* of the *Sanctuary*, twice as big. The *Primitive Chriſtians* lookt upon *Good Nature* to be ſuch an Eſſential part of *Religion*, That *Tertullian* tells us, the *Profeſſors* of *Chriſtianity* were at firſt call'd not *Chriſtiani*, but *Chreſtiani*, from a word importing *Sweetneſs of Temper*. And we know, it was the great Diſtinguiſhing Character of the *Chriſtians* of Old, given 'em by their profeſt Enemies, *Ecce ut Chriſtiani ament*: Behold how theſe *Chriſtians* love one another. From all this (then) we may inferr, That true *Chriſtianity* is the *beſt natur'd* Inſtitution in the World; and that ſo far as any Church is departed from *Good Nature*, and becomes cruel and barbarous ſo far is it degenerated from *Chriſtianity*. But ſuch has been the Misfortune of theſe latter Ages, That this bleſſed Religion (ſo apt

are

are the beſt Things to corrupt in proceſs of time) is ſo much miſtaken by ſome Men, that under pretence thereof, they act the moſt Barbarous and Inhumane Actions; and in a moſt prepoſterous Manner think, that the beſt way to advance *Religion*, is to baniſh Peace. But it is wonderful to me, That, that which was deſign'd to make us Happy in *another* World, ſhou'd by its Diviſions make us moſt Miſerable in *this*; and that which was ordain'd for the ſaving of Mens *Souls*, ſhou'd be made uſe of to take away their *Lives*, or, what is more valuable, their *Liberties*.

Of all the Tyrannies *on Humane Kind*
The Worſt is that which Perſecutes *the Mind.*
Let us but weigh at what Offence we ſtrike,
'Tis but becauſe we cannot Think *alike.*

In

In puniſhing of This *we over-throw*
The Laws of Nations *and of* Nature *too.*

DRYD. Hind *and* Panther

And what is all this Buſtle for? Only to *force* Men to the ſame Opinion in Matters of *Religion*, a Thing which the Experience of all Ages hath ſhewn to be both Unſafe and Impracticable. Alas! 'Tis a fond Imagination to think, That *Religion* can be impos'd on Men; or that we can bind the *Underſtandings* and *Wills* of Men with the ſame Fetters we do their Bodies. 'Tis true, did *Religion* conſiſt only in ſome *External Conformities*, then *External Force* might bear ſome Proportion to it: But *Religion*, we know, is ſeated in thoſe *Faculties*, to which *outward Violence* can have no acceſs. 'Tis *Reaſon* then,

then, not *Force* muſt gain the Conqueſt. *Force* in matters of *Opinion* is ſo far from doing any good, that it is often apt to do hurt; for it is not in any Mans power, to alter his *Opinion* whenever he has a Mind to't; Indeed, it were very well if he cou'd, for by that Means he might cure many Inconveninences of his Life: As for inſtance, if a Man who lies under a ſevere fit of the *Colick*, or the *Stone*, could but perſwade himſelf he was at eaſe and felt no pain; or if a Man, who is plunder'd or Impriſon'd, cou'd but imagine he was kindly us'd, he might then ſleep without any diſturbance: But, I ſay, ſince a Man cannot alter his Opinion when he liſts, nor ever does heartily, or reſolutely but when he cannot do otherwiſe, then to uſe *Force* may make a Man a *Hypocrite*, but never to be a *Real Convert*. No wonder then, the *Heathens* lived ſo quietly, without any Quarrel, or War of Opinions in Matters of *Religion*: For tho' their

their ſeveral Cities profeſs'd the Worſhip of ſeveral *Deitie's*, yet we read not of any War which ſprung from that Diverſity. The *Poets* have made the *Gods* enter into *Factions* and Quarrels for *Common-Wealths*, but *Common-Wealths* never did the ſame for their *Gods*. This Quiet and Happineſs, which to the ſhame and ſcandal of the *Chriſtian* Name was enjoy'd four thouſand Years among the *Heathen*, continued ſo long and ſo uninterrupted, becauſe every Man, following the Rules of his own judgment, allowed that *Liberty* to others which he found ſo neceſſary for himſelf. And even the *Stoicks* themſelves, who enſlav'd the *Will*, durſt never attempt this violence to the *Underſtanding*. But (God knows) among us *Chriſtians* it has (unhappily) fallen out quite otherwiſe; for the leaſt Difference ſets us together by the Ears, and then we Stigmatize one another with the Blackeſt Characters and the moſt Reproachful Terms

Terms. When People once ſeparate and randezvous themſelves into diſtinct *Sects* and *Parties*, they always confine their kindneſs to their own *Party*, and look with a Scornful and Malignant Aſpect upon all the reſt of Mankind; thoſe that are not within the Pale of their *Church*, cannot be within the Sphear of their *Charity*. For they think it no part of their Duty to Commiſerate or Supply the Wants of the *Unregenerate*. As the *Poet* deſcribes the *Jewiſh Bigots*:

Non Monſtrare vias, eademniſi ſacra Colenti,
Quæſitum ad fontem ſolos deducere Verpos.

They would not ſo much as direct the Way to any but a *Circumcis'd Brother*, nor beſtow a Cup of Cold Water upon a Thirſty *Samaritan*. And thus, according to *Hudibras*,

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Do all Religions flock together,
Like Tame *and* Wild Fowl *of a Feather.*

Moſt Men are ſo fond of their own *Opinions* in Matters of *Religion*, that whoever oppoſes them, are lookt upon not only as *their* Enemies, but as *God's* too: And therefore when Paſſion is fired with *Religious Zeal*, nothing can temper its outragious Heats; But it works the Minds of Men into rancour and bitterneſs, and drives 'em into all manner of Savage and Inhumane Practices. Nay, and which is ſtill the more deplorable, it is conſtantly obſerved, That all *Parties* are much Warmer and more Furious in defending thoſe *Points* for which there is leaſt *Reaſon*; for, ſays *Tillotſon*, what Men want of *Reaſon* for their *Opinions*, they uſually ſupply and make up in *Rage*. We are now come to that paſs, that we cannot with pa-

tience admit of *other* Mens *Opinions*, nor endure that *our own* ſhou'd be oppos'd. As it was in the *Lacedemonian* Army, almoſt all were *Captains*; ſo in our Diſputes, all will be *Leaders* and we look on our ſelves to be much affronted, if others think not as we do. Men are as apt to defend their *Opinions*, as their *Property*, and wou'd take it as well to have their *Titles* to their *Eſtates* queſtion'd as their *Senſe*. And it often happens, that the Weaker their *Opinions* are, the fonder they are of them; juſt like Indulgent Mothers, that are moſt tender of thoſe Children that are Weakeſt. Hence many Men are ſo poſſeſt with their own *Phancies* and *Opinions*, that they take them for *Oracles*, and think they *ſee Viſions*, when at the ſame time (God knows) they do but *Dream Dreams*. In a Word, moſt Men are ſo fond of their own *Opinions* that they make themſelves the *Standards* of Wiſdom,

dom, to which all are Bound to conform, and whoever weighs not in their Ballance, be his Reasons never so Weighty, they write *Tekel* upon them. But after all, *Opinions* are but *Reliſhes*; and Men differ no leſs in them, than in their *Taſts* and *Palats*: Therefore I may with as much reaſon be angry with a Man, for not being of my *Diet*, as for not being of my *Opinion*. That all Men ſhou'd be of the ſame *Opinion*, and agree in the ſame Conception and Apprehenſions of things, is impoſſible, and no more to be expected in this Life, than that all Mens Faces and Complexions ſhou'd be alike, for as long as Men have different Educations, Tempers, Conſtitutions of Body, Inclinations of Mind, and Several Intereſts to ſerve; ſo long there will be Diſputes and Controverſies even about matters of *Religion*: What Deviliſh Pride (then) is it, to endeavour (like the *Old Tyrant*) to Stretch, or

Cramp up, every Man to the proportion of my Bed? It is certainly the greateſt Oppreſſion and Uſurpation imaginable, to aſſault, or try to overcome the Reaſon of another by any thing elſe but Reaſon. The way to our future happineſs has been perpetually diſputed throughout the World, and muſt be left at laſt to the *Impreſſions* made upon every Mans *Belief* or *Conſcience*, either by Naturel or Supernatural Arguments and Means; which *Impreſſions* Men may diſguiſe or diſſemble, but no Man can reſiſt. For *Belief* is no more in a Man's Power, than his Stature, or his Feature: And he that tells me, I muſt change my *Opinion* for his, becauſe it is the truer and better, without other Arguments, that have to me the force of Conviction, may as well tell me, I muſt change my *Gray Eyes* for others like his that are *Black*; becauſe theſe are lovelier, or more in eſteem. He that tells me, I muſt *Inform* my ſelf; has reaſon,

if

if I do it not: But if I endeavour it all that I can, and perhaps more than he ever did, and yet ſtill differ from him; And he, that it may be is idle, will have me Study on, and *Inform* my ſelf better, and ſo to the end of my Life; Then I eaſily underſtand what he means by *Informing*, which is in ſhort, that I muſt do it till I come to be of his *Opinion*. If he that perhaps purſues his Pleaſures or Intereſts as much or more than I do; And allows me to have as good ſenſe as he has in all other matters; tells me, I ſhould be of his *Opinion*, but that *Paſſion* or *Intereſt* blinds me; unleſs he can convince me *How* or *Where* this lies, he is but where he was, only pretends to know me better than I do my ſelf, who cannot imagine, why I ſhould not have as much care of *my* Soul as he has of *his*. A Man that tells me, my *Opinions* are abſurd or ridiculous, impertinent or unreaſonable, becauſe they differ from *his*, ſeems to intend a *Quarrel*

inſtead of a *Diſpute*; and calls me *Fool* or *Madman* with a little more Circumſtance; Tho perhaps I paſs for one as well in my Senſes as *He*, as pertinent in Talk, and as prudent in Life; yet theſe are the common Civilities in Religious Arguments of Conceited Men, who talk much of *Right Reaſon*, but mean always *their own*; and make their private Imagination the meaſure of general truth. But ſuch Language determins all between us, and the Diſpute comes to end in three Words at laſt, which it might as well have ended in at firſt, that *he is in the Right, and I am in the Wrong*. At this rate, and in this obſtinate manner, do the generality of Men act in the Concerns of *Religion*, as thinking they cannot ſhew too much Heat and Zeal upon that Subject. When once Mens Minds have taken up *Schemes* and *Ideas* of *Religion* right or wrong they are reſolv'd to defend them, and every thing within their reach is preſt and made to

ſerve

ſerve in defence of thoſe preconceiv'd Opinions. Even *Scripture* it ſelf, let the genuine Senſe be what it will, is too often made uſe of to theſe purpoſes; Nay, if there be any one Word, or Phraſe in the *Bible*, that Sounds like the *Tinkling* of ſuch Mens Fancies, preſently they conclude, that God himſelf ſpeaks their Language. And thus do they ſtamp Divinity on their wildeſt and moſt extravagant *Opinions*, twiſting and twining the *Scripture* as they have a mind to't: They faſten their own Conceits upon God; and like the *Harlot* in the Book of *Kings* do they take their dead and putrified Fancies, and lay them in the Boſome of *Scripture*. But theſe Men deal with *Scripture* juſt as *Chymiſts* do with Natural Bodies, torturing them to extract that out of them, which God and Nature never put in them. And therefore no wonder, we find ſuch Diverſity of *Opinions* in matters of *Religion*,

for if we ſtrive to *give* unto *Scripture*, and not to *receive* from it the Senſe, we may eaſily deduce what Inference we pleaſe and likewiſe eſtabliſh whatever Notions we think fit. *Religious Diſputes* are of a *Prolifick* Nature, eſpecially when they are manag'd by Men of Art and Sophiſtry, as may appear by the Elaborate Trifles of the *Schoolmen*. Indeed when I conſider the Subtile Diviſions and Nice Diſtinctions of theſe Men, I cannot but fancy, they had the power of Working Miracles; Queſtions in their Hands, Multiplying in the Breaking, like the *Loaves* in our *Saviour's*; Tho' I muſt confeſs to very different purpoſes, no ſolid Nouriſhment being deriv'd from the *One*, but on the Contrary *Stones* given us inſtead of *Bread*, and thoſe too, even to fling at one another. Little advantage (then) has our *Religion* receiv'd from theſe Men, the beſt of whoſe Curioſities, and Learned

Trifles

Trifles, are but like *Paint* on *Glaſs*, which ſerves only to hinder and intercept the Light. But as our Differences in *Religion* are many, ſo, that which aggravates our Misfortune is, that theſe Differences have (many of them) been grounded upon the ſlighteſt, and moſt minute matters, and have often times proceeded from the moſt Inconſiderable Beginings. What was *Religion* the better for that long diſpute concerning the day on which *Eaſter* was to be obſerv'd? Or did it ſignifie any thing to *Religion*, what *Cecilian* or his *Ordainers* were eſpecially, in the Age after they were dead? And yet not only a Seperation and violent Rage, but a great Effuſion of Blood, with the other diſmal Conſequences of that blind Fury, follow'd upon this, and the *Africans* continued Quarrelling about it, till the *Vandals* came, and deſtroy'd both the one and the other. But I need not go ſo

far

far from home for Inſtances of this Kind; ſince our own Hiſtories do furniſh us with Examples of this Nature. One could not reaſonably have imagin'd, that the Diſpute concerning *Hoods* and *Surplices* could have riſe to ſo great a Height. Who could ever have thought, that an old Womans Muttering againſt the *Liturgy*, when it was firſt introduced into *Scotland*, ſhould have prov'd the firſt beginning of the late Civil Wars? And yet in Fact that it was ſo, every Body knows. Thus we ſee, that one Conteſt Breeds another; and that which perhaps began at a *Speculative* Point, ends in a *Practical* one; and that which begins in ſome *Rite* or *Ceremony*, grows at laſt to a Breach in Matters of *Faith*. And thus it is beyond all Diſpute, that many of the Conteſts about *Myſteries* began at ſome

ſome unwary Expreſſions, in which the *one ſide* faſten'd ill Senſes on the Words ſpoken by the *other*; and the *other*, rather than yield ſo far, for Peace ſake, as to explain themſelves, choſe rather to juſtifie their Words in any Sence, than to retract or mollifie them.

I have often-times been amaz'd to ſee, with how much Zeal and Fury ſome Men have defended the uſe of *Ceremonies*, as if they were really eſſential to *Religion*; whereas nothing has been a greater Clog or Impediment to *Religion*, than the mixing it with too many *Ceremonies*. We know it hath been the conſtant obſervation, that the Life and Vigour of *Chriſtianity* never decay'd more, than when *Ceremonies* multiplied moſt. *Chriſtian Religion* is a Plain, Simple, Eaſie thing; *Chriſt* commends his Yoke to us by the eaſineſs

eaſineſs of it, and his Burthen by the lightneſs of it. It was an excellent Teſtimony which *Ammianus Marcellinus*, a Heathen, gave to *Chriſtianity*, when ſpeaken of *Conſtantius*, that *'he had Spoil'd the Beauty of Chriſtianity, by Muffling it up in Superſtitious Obſervations.* And it is as true which *Eraſmus* ſaid in Anſwer to the *Sorboniſts*, that *External Ceremonies teach us Backwards, and bring us back from Chriſt to Moſes.* It is not to be imagin'd by any Sober Man, that the Lord of Heaven and Earth, who is ſo Jealous of his own Worſhip, that under the *Law* he ſeverly prohibited the *Adding to*, or *Diminiſhing* one Tittle from what he had commanded, and under the *Goſpel* gave no other Commiſſion, than to teach according to what he had commanded; 'tis not I ſay to be imagin'd, that he hath left his Worſhip to the Invention of corrupt, frail

frail Man, inclinable above all things to Superſtition and Idolatry, and who are by Nature endleſly various in their Sence, Imaginations and Underſtandings: This certainly ſeems highly irrational, and to accuſe *Chriſt* of not having been as a *Son*, ſo careful of his Church, as *Moſes* a *Servant* was of the Church of God under the *Law*: For had *Chriſt* intended to have left his Church under a *Negative* Obedience in Worſhip, making all things Lawful that he had not forbidden, the Command had been as readily made, to do whatſoever he had not prohibited, as it was to do whatſoever he hath commanded. The Learned and Ingenious Mr. *Hales* tells us, That to charge *Churches* and *Liturgies* with things unneceſſary, was the firſt Beginning of all Superſtition. And agreeably hereunto, does Biſhop *Bramhal*, in his Diſcourſe of *Schiſm*, profeſs to all the World, That the transforming of *Indifferent Opinions* into

into *Neceſſary Articles* of *Faith*, hath been that *Inſana Laurus*, or *Curſed Bay-Tree*, the Cauſe of all our Differences and Contentions. The *Ancient Fathers* call'd the *Creed Symbolum*, the *Shot*, and *Total Summ* of *Faith*; but ſince their Times we have had a great many *after-Reckonings* brought us in; to which if we will not pay our Belief, our Souls muſt be arreſted without *Bail* upon pain of Eternal Damnation. In the Beginning of the *Reformation*, CEREMONIES were retain'd to win upon the People, who were then generally *Papiſts*, and doated upon old uſages, and not as the neceſſary conditions of Communion; they were retain'd not to ſhut out of doors the *Proteſtants*, as in the late Reigns they were us'd, but to invite in the *Romaniſts*, which was their original End; But there's nothing more common, than for *Inſtitutions* to degenerate, and be perverted from the firſt Reaſons of their

their uſage, and yet ſtill to plead the Credit of their *Originals*: Thus *Indulgences*, and *Remiſſion* of *Sins*, were firſt granted to all that wou'd engage in the *Holy War*, to recover the *Sepulchre* of *Chriſt* out of the Hands of the *Saracens*; but in proceſs of time they were diſpenced to them who would Maſſacre the *Waldenſes* and *Albigenſes*, and ſuch as cou'd not Obey the Tyranny of the *Romiſh* Faction: Thus was the *Inquiſition* firſt ſet up to diſcover the Hypocritical *Moors* in *Spain*; but the Edge of it ſince turn'd againſt the *Proteſtants*. And thus were the *Ceremonies* perverted, at firſt made a *Key* to let in the *Papiſts*, and ſince made a *Lock* to ſhut out *Proteſtants*.

FINIS.